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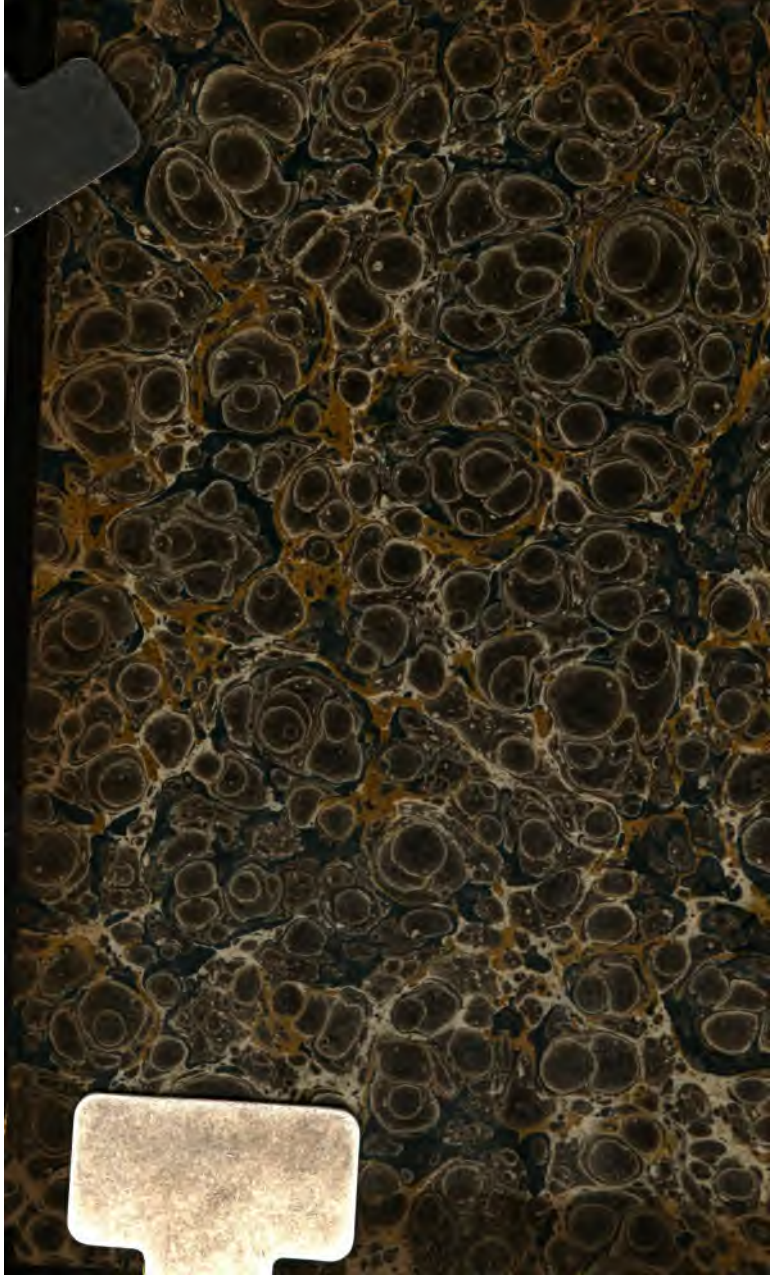

bought from J. Clarke-Hall after a visit
— December 1908

Paris 1806

3 Volumes Paul Adam
Lot 1806

To my dear M. F.
in memory of
many pleasant
days.

1924.

256 e. 17500 (1)

Le Barbier l'aîné delin. Le Cerf sculp.

She then entered, - in such a condition! - entirely covered with mud.

EVELINA:

OR

THE HISTORY

OF

A YOUNG LADY'S ENTRANCE

INTO THE WORLD.

A NEW EDITION IN THREE VOLUMES WITH PLATES.

VOL. I.

PARIS.

PRINTED FOR THEOPHILUS BARROIS, JUNIOR,
BOOKSELLER, N.° 5, QUAY VOLTAIRE.

M DCCC VIII.

27 MAR 1969
LIBRARY

TO ....

Oh author of my being!—far more dear
To me than light, than nourishment, or rest,—
Hygiea's blessings, Rapture's burning tear,
Or the life blood that mantles in my breast!

If in my heart the love of virtue glows,
'Twas planted there by an unerring rule,—
From thy example the pure flame arose;
Thy life, my precept—thy good works, my school.

Could my weak pow'rs thy num'rous virtues trace,
By filial love each fear should be repress'd;
The blush of incapacity I'd chace,
And stand recorder of thy worth confess'd:

But, since my niggard stars that gift refuse,
Concealment is the only boon I claim:
Obscure be still the unsuccessful Muse,
Who cannot raise but would not sink thy fame.

Oh! of my life at once the source and joy!
If e'er thy eyes these feeble lines survey,
Let not their folly their intent destroy;
Accept the tribute — but forget the lay!

TO

THE AUTHORS

OF

THE MONTHLY AND CRITICAL REVIEWS.

GENTLEMEN,

THE liberty which I take, in addressing to you the trifling production of a few idle hours, will, doubtless, move your wonder and probably your contempt: I will not, however, with the futility of apologies, intrude upon your time, but briefly acknowledge the mo-

tives of my temerity: lest, by a premature exercise of that patience which I hope will befriend me, I should lessen its benevolence and be accessory to my own condemnation.

Without name, without recommendation, and unknown alike to success and disgrace, to whom can I so properly apply for patronage as to those who publicly profess themselves Inspectors of all literary performances?

The extensive plan of your critical observations,—which, not confined to works of utility or ingenuity, is equally open to those of frivolous amusement, —and yet worse than frivolous dulness,—encourages me to seek for your protection; since,—perhaps for my sins!

—it entitles me to your annotations: to resent, therefore, this offering, however insignificant, would ill become the universality of your undertaking; though not to despise it may, alas! be out of your power.

The language of adulation and the incense of flattery, though the natural inheritance and constant resource, from time immemorial, of the Dedicator, to me offer nothing but the wistful regret that I dare not invoke their aid. Sinister views would be imputed to all I could say; since, thus situated, to extol your judgment would seem the effect of art, and to celebrate your impartiality be attributed to suspecting it.

As Magistrates of the press and Cen-

sors for the public,—to which you are bound by the sacred ties of integrity to exert the most spirited impartiality, and to which your suffrages should carry the marks of pure, dauntless, irrefragable truth—to appeal for your MERCY were to solicit your dishonor; and, therefore,—though 'tis sweeter than frankincense—more grateful to the senses than all the odorous perfumes of Arabia, —and though

> It droppeth like the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath,—

I court it not! to your justice alone I am entitled; and by that I must abide. Your engagements are not to the supplicating author, but to the

candid public, which will not fail to crave

The penalty and forfeit of your bond.

No hacknied writer, inured to abuse and callous to criticism, here braves your severity;—neither does a half-starved garretteer—

Oblig'd by hunger and request of friends –

implore your lenity: your examination will be alike unbiassed by partiality and prejudice—no refractory murmuring will follow your censure—no private interest be gratified by your praise.

Let not the anxious solicitude, with which I recommend myself to your notice, expose me to your derision:

remember, Gentlemen, you were all young writers once; and the most experienced veteran of your corps may, by recollecting his first publication, renovate his first terrors, and learn to allow for mine: for, though courage is one of the noblest virtues of this nether sphere, and, though scarcely more requisite, in the field of battle, to guard the fighting hero from disgrace, than, in the private commerce of the world, to ward off that littleness of soul which leads by steps imperceptible to all the base train of the inferior passions, and by which the too timid mind is betrayed into a servility derogatory to the dignity of human nature; yet is it a virtue of no necessity in a situation such as

mine—a situation which removes, even from cowardice itself, the sting of ignominy; for surely that courage may easily be dispensed with, which would rather excite disgust than admiration! Indeed, it is the peculiar privilege of an author to rob terror of contempt and pusillanimity of reproach.

Here let me rest, and snatch myself, while I yet am able, from the fascination of EGOTISM,—a monster, who has more votaries than ever did homage to the most popular deity of antiquity; and whose singular quality is, that, while he excites a blind and involuntary adoration in almost every individual, his influence is universally disallowed; his power universally contemned; and his worship,

even by his followers, never mentioned but with abhorrence.

In addressing you jointly, I mean but to mark the generous sentiments by which liberal criticism, to the utter annihilation of envy, jealousy, and all selfish views, ought to be distinguished.

I have the honor to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient

Humble servant

* * * * * * *

PREFACE.

In the republic of letters, there is no member of such inferior rank, or who is so much disdained by his brethren of the quill, as the humble Novelist: nor is his fate less hard in the world at large, since, among the whole class of writers, perhaps not one can be named of which the votaries are more numerous but less respectable.

Yet, while in the annals of those few of our predecessors, to whom this species of writing is indebted for being

saved from contempt and rescued from depravity, we can trace such names as Rousseau, Johnson*, Marivaux, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollet,—no man need blush at starting from the same post; though many, nay, most men, may sigh at finding themselves distanced.

The following letters are presented to the public,—for such, by novel writers, novel readers will be called,—with a very singular mixture of timidity and confidence, resulting from the peculiar situation of the editor; who, though trembling for their success from a consciousness of their imperfections, yet

* However superior the capacities in which these great writers deserve to be considered, they must pardon me that, for the dignity of my subject, I here rank the authors of Rasselas and Eloise as Novelists.

fears not being involved in their disgrace, while happily wrapped up in a mantle of impenetrable obscurity.

To draw characters from nature though not from life, and to mark the manners of the times, is the attempted plan of the following letters. For this purpose, a young female, educated in the most secluded retirement, makes, at the age of seventeen, her first appearance upon the great and busy stage of life; with a virtuous mind, a cultivated understanding, and a feeling heart, her ignorance of the forms and inexperience in the manners of the world occasion all the little incidents which these volumes record, and which form the natural progression of the life of a young woman, of obscure birth but conspicuous beauty, for the first six

months after her entrance into the world.

Perhaps, were it possible to effect the total extirpation of novels, our young ladies in general, and boarding-school damsels in particular, might profit from their annihilation: but, since the distemper they have spread seems incurable—since their contagion bids defiance to the medicine of advice or reprehension—and since they are found to baffle all the mental art of physic, save what is prescribed by the slow regimen of time and the bitter diet of experience—surely all attempts to contribute to the number of those which may be read, if not with advantage, at least without injury, ought rather to be encouraged than contemned.

Let me, therefore, prepare for disap-

pointment those who, in the perusal of these sheets, entertain the gentle expectation of being transported to the fantastic regions of Romance, where fiction is colored by all the gay tints of luxurious imagination, where reason is an outcast, and where the sublimity of the marvellous rejects all aid from sober probability:—the heroine of these memoirs, young, artless, and inexperienced, is

No faultless monster, that the world ne'er saw,

but the offspring of Nature,—and of Nature in her simplest attire.

In all the arts, the value of copies can only be proportioned to the scarceness of originals; among sculptors and painters, a fine statue or a beautiful picture of some great master may de-

to an opinion of my own originality, which I have not the vanity, the folly, nor the blindness, to entertain.

Whatever may be the fate of these letters, the editor is satisfied they will meet with justice; and commits them to the press, though hopeless of fame yet not regardless of censure.

EVELINA.

LETTER I.

LADY HOWARD TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, Kent.

CAN any thing, my good Sir, be more painful to a friendly mind, than a necessity of communicating disagreeable intelligence? Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether the relator or the receiver of evil tidings is most to be pitied.

I have just had a letter from Madame Duval: she is totally at a loss in what manner to behave; she seems desirous to repair the wrongs she has done, yet wishes the world to believe her blameless. She would fain cast upon another the odium of those misfortunes for which she alone is answerable. Her letter is violent, sometimes abusive, and that of *you!—you,* to whom she is under obligations which are greater even than her faults, but to whose advice she wickedly imputes all the sufferings

of her much-injured daughter, the late Lady Belmont. The chief purport of her writing I will acquaint you with; the letter itself is not worthy your notice.

She tells me that she has, for many years past, been in continual expectation of making a journey to England, which prevented her writing for information concerning this melancholy subject, by giving her hopes of making personal inquiries; but family occurrences have still detained her in France, which country she now sees no prospect of quitting. She has, therefore, lately used her utmost endeavours to obtain a faithful account of whatever related to her *ill-advised* daughter; the result of which giving her *some reason* to apprehend that upon her death-bed she bequeathed an infant orphan to the world, she most graciously says, that if *you*, with whom *she understands* the child is placed, will procure authentic proofs of its relationship to her, you may send it to Paris, where she will properly provide for it.

This woman is, undoubtedly, at length, self-convicted of her most unnatural behaviour: it is evident, from her writing, that she is still as vulgar and illiterate as when her first husband, Mr. Evelyn, had the weakness to marry her; nor does she at all apologise for addressing herself to me, though I was only once in her company.

Her letter has excited in my daughter Mirvan a strong desire to be informed of the motives which induced Madame Duval to abandon the unfortunate Lady Belmont, at a time when a mother's protection was peculiarly necessary for her peace and her reputation. Notwithstanding I was personally acquainted with all the parties concerned in that affair, the subject always appeared of too delicate a nature to be spoken of with the principals; I cannot, therefore, satisfy Mrs. Mirvan otherwise than by applying to you.

By saying that you *may* send the child, Madame Duval aims at *conferring* where she most *owes* obligation. I pretend not to give you advice; you, to whose generous protection this helpless orphan is indebted for every thing, are the best and only judge of what she ought to do; but I am much concerned at the trouble and uneasiness which this unworthy woman may occasion you.

My daughter and my grandchild join with me in desiring to be most kindly remembered to the amiable girl; and they bid me remind you, that the annual visit to Howard Grove, which we were formerly promised, has been discontinued for more than four years. I am, dear Sir, with great regard,

Your most obedient friend and servant,

M. Howard.

LETTER II.

MR. VILLARS TO LADY HOWARD.

Berry-Hill, Dorsetshire.

YOUR Ladyship did but too well foresee the perplexity and uneasiness of which Madame Duval's letter has been productive: however, I ought rather to be thankful that I have so many years remained unmolested, than repine at my present embarrassment; since it proves, at least, that this wretched woman is at length awakened to remorse.

In regard to my answer, I most humbly request your Ladyship to write to this effect: — "That I would not, upon any account, intentionally offend Madame Duval, but that I have weighty, nay unanswerable reasons for detaining her grandaughter at present in England; the principal of which is, that it was the earnest desire of one to whose will she owes implicit duty. Madame Duval may be assured that she meets with the utmost attention and tenderness; that her education,

however short of my wishes, almost exceeds my abilities; and I flatter myself, when the time arrives that she shall pay her duty to her grandmother, Madame Duval will find no reason to be dissatisfied with what has been done for her."

Your Ladyship will not, I am sure, be surprised at this answer. Madame Duval is by no means a proper companion or guardian for a young woman: she is at once uneducated and unprincipled;—ungentle in her temper, and unamiable in her manners. I have long known that she has persuaded herself to harbour an aversion for me—Unhappy woman! I can only regard her as an object of pity!

I dare not hesitate at a request from Mrs. Mirvan; yet, in complying with it, I shall, for her own sake, be as concise as I possibly can; since the cruel transactions, which preceded the birth of my ward, afford no entertainment to a mind so humane as hers.

Your Ladyship may probably have heard that I had the honor to accompany Mr. Evelyn, the grandfather of my young charge, when upon his travels, in the capacity of a tutor. His unhappy marriage, immediately upon his return to England, with Madame Duval, then a waiting-girl at a tavern, contrary to the advice and entreaties of all his friends, among whom I was

myself the most urgent, induced him to abandon his native land and fix his abode in France. Thither he was followed by shame and repentance; feelings which his heart was not framed to support: for, notwithstanding he had been too weak to resist the allurements of beauty, which nature, though a niggard to her of every other boon, had with a lavish hand bestowed on his wife; yet he was a young man of excellent character, and, till thus unaccountably infatuated, of unblemished conduct. He survived this ill-judged marriage but two years. Upon his death-bed, with an unsteady hand, he wrote me the following note:

"My friend! forget your resentment in favor of your humanity;—a father, trembling for the welfare of his child, bequeathes her to your care.—O Villars! hear, pity, and relieve me!"

Had my circumstances permitted me, I should have answered these words by an immediate journey to Paris; but I was obliged to act by the agency of a friend, who was upon the spot, and present at the opening of the will.

Mr. Evelyn left to me a legacy of a thousand pounds, and the sole guardianship of his daughter's person till her eighteenth year; conjuring me, in the most affecting terms, to take the charge of her education till she was able to act with

propriety for herself; but in regard to fortune he left her wholly dependent on her mother, to whose tenderness he earnestly recommended her.

Thus, though he would not, to a woman low-bred and illiberal as Mrs. Evelyn, trust the conduct and morals of his daughter, he nevertheless thought proper to secure to her the respect and duty which, from her own child, were certainly her due; but, unhappily, it never occurred to him that the mother, on her part, could fail in affection or justice.

Miss Evelyn, Madam, from the second to the eighteenth year of her life, was brought up under my care, and, except when at school, under my roof. I need not speak to your Ladyship of the virtues of that excellent young creature. She loved me as her father; nor was Mrs. Villars less valued by her; while to me she became so dear, that her loss was little less afflicting than that which I have since sustained of Mrs. Villars herself.

At that period of her life we parted; her mother, then married to Monsieur Duval, sent for her to Paris. How often have I since regretted that I did not accompany her thither! protected and supported by me, the misery and disgrace which awaited her might, perhaps, have been avoided. But, to be brief—Madame

Duval, at the instigation of her husband, earnestly, or rather tyrannically, endeavoured to effect a union between Miss. Evelyn and one of his nephews; and, when she found her power inadequate to her attempt, enraged at her non-compliance, she treated her with the grossest unkindness, and threatened her with poverty and ruin.

Miss Evelyn, to whom wrath and violence had hitherto been strangers, soon grew weary of such usage; and rashly, and without a witness, consented to a private marriage with Sir John Belmont, a very profligate young man, who had but too successfully found means to insinuate himself into her favor. He promised to conduct her to England — he did. — Oh, Madam, you know the rest! — Disappointed of the fortune he expected by the inexorable rancor of the Duvals, he infamously burned the certificate of their marriage, and denied that they had ever been united!

She flew to me for protection. With what mixed transports of joy and anguish did I again see her! By my advice she endeavoured to procure proofs of her marriage;—but in vain: her credulity had been no match for his art.

Every body believed her innocent, from the guiltless tenor of her unspotted youth, and from the known libertinism of her barbarous betrayer;

yet her sufferings were too acute for her tender frame, and the same moment that gave birth to her infant put an end at once to the sorrows and the life of its mother.

The rage of Madame Duval at her elopement abated not while this injured victim of cruelty yet drew breath. She probably intended, in time, to have pardoned her; but time was not allowed. When she was informed of her death, I have been told that the agonies of grief and remorse, with which she was seized, occasioned her a severe fit of illness. But, from the time of her recovery to the date of her letter to your Ladyship, I had never heard that she manifested any desire to be made acquainted with the circumstances which attended the death of Lady Belmont and the birth of her helpless child.

That child, Madam, shall never, while life is lent me, know the loss she has sustained. I have cherished, succoured, and supported her, from her earliest infancy to her sixteenth year; and so amply has she repaid my care and affection, that my fondest wish is now circumscribed by the desire of bestowing her on one who may be sensible of her worth, and then sinking to eternal rest in her arms.

Thus it has happened that the education of the father, daughter, and grandaughter, has devolved on me. What infinite misery have

the two first caused me! Should the fate of the dear survivor be equally adverse, how wretched will be the end of my cares — the end of my days!

Even had Madame Duval merited the charge she claims, I fear my fortitude would have been unequal to such a parting; but, being such as she is, not only my affection but my humanity recoils at the barbarous idea of deserting the sacred trust reposed in me. Indeed, I could but ill support her former yearly visits to the respectable mansion at Howard Grove; pardon me, dear Madam, and do not think me insensible of the honor which your Ladyship's condescension confers upon us both; but so deep is the impression which the misfortunes of her mother have made on my heart, that she does not, even for a moment, quit my sight, without exciting apprehensions and terrors which almost overpower me. Such, Madam, is my tenderness, and such my weakness! — But she is the only tie I have upon earth, and I trust to your Ladyship's goodness not to judge of my feelings with severity.

I beg leave to present my humble respects to Mrs. and Miss Mirvan; and have the honor to be, Madam, your Ladyship's most obedient and

Most humble servant,

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER III.

LADY HOWARD TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS—WRITTEN SOME MONTHS AFTER THE LAST.

Howard Grove, March 8.

DEAR AND REV. SIR,

YOUR last letter gave me infinite pleasure: after so long and tedious an illness, how grateful to yourself and to your friends must be your returning health! You have the hearty wishes of every individual of this place for its continuance and increase.

Will you not think I take advantage of your acknowledged recovery, if I once more venture to mention your pupil and Howard Grove together? Yet you must remember the patience with which we submitted to your desire of not parting with her during the bad state of your health, though it was with much reluctance we forbore to solicit her company. My granddaughter, in particular, has scarce been able to repress her eagerness to again meet the friend of her infancy; and for my own part, it is very strongly my wish to manifest the regard I had

for the unfortunate Lady Belmont, by proving serviceable to her child; which seems to me the best respect that can be paid to her memory. Permit me, therefore, to lay before you a plan which Mrs. Mirvan and I have formed, in consequence of your restoration to health.

I would not frighten you;—but do you think you could bear to part with your young companion for two or three months? Mrs. Mirvan proposes to spend the ensuing spring in London, whither, for the first time, my grandchild will accompany her: now, my good friend, it is very earnestly their wish to enlarge and enliven their party by the addition of your amiable ward, who would share, equally with her own daughter, the care and attention of Mrs. Mirvan. Do not start at this proposal; it is time that she should see something of the world. When young people are too rigidly sequestered from it, their lively and romantic imaginations paint it to them as a paradise of which they have been beguiled; but when they are shown it properly, and in due time, they see it such as it really is, equally shared by pain and pleasure, hope and disappointment.

You have nothing to apprehend from her meeting with Sir John Belmont, as that abandoned man is now abroad, and not expected home this year.

Well, my good Sir, what say you to our scheme? I hope it will meet with your approbation; but if it should not, be assured I can never object to any decision of one who is so much respected and esteemed as Mr. Villars, by

His most faithful humble servant,

M. HOWARD.

LETTER IV.

MR. VILLARS TO LADY HOWARD.

Berry Hill, March 12.

I AM grieved, Madam, to appear obstinate; and I blush to incur the imputation of selfishness. In detaining my young charge thus long with myself in the country, I consulted not solely my own inclination. Destined, in all probability, to possess a very moderate fortune, I wished to contract her views to something within it. The mind is but too naturally prone to pleasure, but too easily yielded to dissipation: it has been my study to guard her against their delusions, by preparing her to expect—and to despise them. But the time draws on for experience and observation to take place of instruction: if I have, in some measure, rendered her capable of using the one with discretion, and making the other with improvement, I shall rejoice myself with the assurance of having largely contributed to her welfare. She is now of an age that happiness is eager to attend,—let her then enjoy it!

I commit her to the protection of your Ladyship, and only hope she may be found worthy half the goodness I am satisfied she will meet with at your hospitable mansion.

Thus far, Madam, I cheerfully submit to your desire. In confiding my ward to the care of Lady Howard, I can feel no uneasiness from her absence but what will arise from the loss of her company, since I shall be as well convinced of her safety as if she were under my roof;—but, can your Ladyship be serious in proposing to introduce her to the gaieties of a London life? Permit me to ask, for what end, or what purpose? A youthful mind is seldom totally free from ambition; to curb that is the first step to contentment, since to diminish expectation is to increase enjoyment. I apprehend nothing more than too much raising her hopes and her views, which the natural vivacity of her disposition would render but too easily to effect. The town acquaintance of Mrs. Mirvan are all in the circle of high life; this artless young creature, with too much beauty to escape notice, has too much sensibility to be indifferent to it; but she has too little wealth to be sought with propriety by men of the fashionable world.

Consider, Madam, the peculiar cruelty of her situation; only child of a wealthy Baronet, whose person she has never seen, whose character

she has reason to abhor, and whose name she is forbidden to claim; entitled as she is to lawfully inherit his fortune and estate, is there any probability that he will *properly* own her: and while he continues to persevere in disavowing his marriage with Miss Evelyn, she shall never, at the expense of her mother's honor, receive a part of her right, as the donation of his bounty.

And as to Mr. Evelyn's estate, I have no doubt but that Madame Duval and her relations will dispose of it among themselves.

It seems, therefore, as if this deserted child though legally heiress of two large fortunes, must owe all her rational expectations to adoption and friendship. Yet her income will be such as may make her happy, if she is disposed to be so in private life; though it will by no means allow her to enjoy the luxury of a London fine lady.

Let Miss Mirvan, then, Madam, shine in all the splendor of high life; but suffer my child still to enjoy the pleasures of humble retirement, with a mind to which greater views are unknown.

I hope this reasoning will be honored with your approbation; and I have yet another motive which has some weight with me; I would not willingly give offence to any human being, and

surely Madame Duval might accuse me of injustice, if, while I refuse to let her grandaughter wait upon her, I consent that she should join a party of pleasure to London.

In sending her to Howard Grove, not one of these scruples arise; and therefore Mrs. Clinton, a most worthy woman, formerly her nurse and now my housekeeper, shall attend her thither next week.

Though I have always called her by the name of Anville, and reported in this neighbourhood that her father, my intimate friend, left her to my guardianship, yet I have thought it necessary she should herself be acquainted with the melancholy circumstances attending her birth; for, though I am very desirous of guarding her from curiosity and impertinence, by concealing her name, family, and story, yet I would not leave it in the power of chance to shock her gentle nature with a tale of so much sorrow.

You must not, Madam, expect too much from my pupil. She is quite a little rustic, and knows nothing of the world; and though her education has been the best I could bestow in this retired place, to which Dorchester, the nearest town, is seven miles distant, yet I shall not be surprised if you should discover in her a thousand deficiencies of which I have never

dreamed. She must be very much altered since she was last at Howard Grove,—but I will say nothing to her; I leave her to your Ladyship's own observations, of which I beg a faithful relation; and am,

Dear Madam, with great respect,

Your obedient and most humble servant,

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER V.

MR. VILLARS TO LADY HOWARD.

March 18.

DEAR MADAM,

THIS letter will be delivered to you by my child,—the child of my adoption,—my affection. Unblest with one natural friend, she merits a thousand. I send her to you innocent as an angel and artless as purity itself; and I send you with her the heart of your friend,—the only hope he has on earth, the subject of his tenderest thoughts, and the object of his latest cares. She is one, Madam, for whom alone I have lately wished to live; and she is one whom to serve I would with transport die! Restore her but to me all innocence as you receive her, and the fondest hope of my heart will be amply gratified.

A. VILLARS.

LETTER VI.

LADY HOWARD TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove.

DEAR AND REV. SIR,

THE solemn manner in which you have committed your child to my care has in some measure damped the pleasure which I receive from the trust, as it makes me fear that you suffer from your compliance; in which case I shall very sincerely blame myself for the earnestness with which I have requested this favor: but remember, my good Sir, she is within a few days summons, and be assured I will not detain her a moment longer than you wish.

You desire my opinion of her. — She is a little angel! I cannot wonder that you sought to monopolize her; neither ought you, at finding it impossible.

Her face and person answer my most refined ideas of complete beauty: and this, though a subject of praise less important to you or to me than any other, is yet so striking, it is not

possible to pass it unnoticed. Had I not known from whom she received her education, I should, at first sight of so perfect a face, have been in pain for her understanding; since it has been long and justly remarked that folly has ever sought alliance with beauty.

She has the same gentleness in her manners, the same natural grace in her motions, that I formerly so much admired in her mother.—Her character seems truly ingenuous and simple; and, at the same time that nature has blessed her with an excellent understanding and great quickness of parts, she has a certain air of inexperience and innocency that is extremely interesting.

You have no reason to regret the retirement in which she has lived; since that politeness which is acquired by an acquaintance with high life, is in her so well supplied by a natural desire of obliging, joined to a deportment infinitely engaging.

I observe with great satisfaction a growing affection between this amiable girl and my granddaughter, whose heart is as free from selfishness or conceit as that of her young friend is from all guile. Their regard may be mutually useful, since much is to be expected from emulation, where nothing is to be feared from envy. I would have them love each other as sisters, and

reciprocally supply the place of that tender and happy relationship, to which neither of them have a natural claim.

Be satisfied, my good Sir, that your child shall meet with the same attention as our own. We all join in most hearty wishes for your health and happiness, and in returning our sincere thanks for the favor you have conferred on us.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most faithful servant,

M. Howard.

LETTER VII.

LADY HOWARD TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, March 26.

BE not alarmed, my worthy friend, at my so speedily troubling you again; I seldom use the ceremony of waiting for answers or writing with any regularity, and I have at present immediate occasion for begging your patience.

Mrs. Mirvan has just received a letter from her long-absent husband, containing the welcome news of his hoping to reach London by the beginning of next week. My daughter and the Captain have been separated almost seven years, and it would therefore be needless to say what joy, surprise, and consequently confusion, his at present unexpected return has caused at Howard Grove. Mrs. Mirvan, you cannot doubt, will go instantly to town to meet him; her daughter is under a thousand obligations to attend her; I grieve that her mother cannot.

And now, my good Sir, I almost blush to proceed;—but, tell me, may I ask—will you

permit—that your child may accompany them? Do not think us unreasonable, but consider the many inducements which conspire to make London the happiest place at present she can be in. The joyful occasion of the journey; the gaiety of the whole party, opposed to the dull life she must lead if left here with a solitary old woman for her sole companion, while she so well knows the cheerfulness and felicity enjoyed by the rest of the family,—are circumstances that seem to merit your consideration. Mrs. Mirvan desires me to assure you that one week is all she asks; as she is certain that the Captain, who hates London, will be eager to revisit Howard Grove; and Maria is so very earnest in wishing to have the company of her friend, that, if you are inexorable, she will be deprived of half the pleasure she otherwise hopes to receive.

However, I will not, my good Sir, deceive you into an opinion that they intend to live in a retired manner, as that cannot be fairly expected. But you have no reason to be uneasy concerning Madame Duval; she has not any correspondent in England, and obtains no intelligence but by common report. She must be a stranger to the name your child bears; and, even should she hear of this excursion, so short a time as a week or less, spent in town upon so particular an occasion, though previous to

their meeting, cannot be construed into disrespect to herself.

Mrs. Mirvan desires me to assure you, that if you will oblige her, her *two* children shall equally share her time and her attention. She has sent a commission to a friend in town to take a house for her; and while she waits for an answer concerning it, I shall for one from you to our petition. However, your child is writing herself; and that, I doubt not, will more avail than all we can possibly urge.

My daughter desires her best compliments to you, *if*, she says, you will grant her request; but *not else*.

Adieu, my dear Sir,—we all hope every thing from your goodness.

M. Howard.

LETTER VIII.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, March 26.

THIS house seems to be the house of joy; every face wears a smile, and a laugh is at every body's service: it is quite amusing to walk about, and see the general confusion.—A room leading to the garden is fitting up for Captain Mirvan's study. Lady Howard does not sit a moment in a place; Miss Mirvan is making caps;—every body so busy!—such flying from room to room!—so many orders given, and retracted, and given again!—nothing but hurry and perturbation.

Well! but, my dear Sir, I am desired to make a request to you. I hope you will not think me an incroacher; Lady Howard insists upon my writing!—yet I hardly know how to go on; a petition implies a want,—and have you left me one?—No, indeed.

I am half ashamed of myself for beginning this letter. But these dear ladies are so pressing

—I cannot, for my life, resist wishing for the pleasures they offer me,—provided you do not disapprove them.

They are to make a very short stay in town. The Captain will meet them in a day or two. Mrs. Mirvan and her sweet daughter both go; —what a happy party! Yet I am not *very* eager to accompany them: at least, I shall be contented to remain where I am, if you desire that I should.

Assured, my dearest Sir, of your goodness, your bounty, and your indulgent kindness, ought I to form a wish that has not your sanction? Decide for me, therefore, without the least apprehension that I shall be uneasy or discontented. While I am yet in suspense, perhaps I may *hope;* but I am most certain, that when you have once determined, I shall not repine.

They tell me that London is now in full splendor. Two Play-houses are open,—the Opera house,—Ranelagh,—and the Pantheon. —You see I have learned all their names. However, pray don't suppose that I make any point of going, for I shall hardly sigh to see them depart without me; though I shall probably never meet with such another opportunity. And, indeed, their domestic happiness will be so great,—it is natural to wish to partake of it.

I believe I am bewitched! I made a resolu-

LETTER X.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Queen-Ann-Street, London, Saturday April 2.

THIS moment arrived—just going to Drury-Lane theatre. The celebrated Mr. Garrick performs Ranger. I am quite in ecstasy;—so is Miss Mirvan. How fortunate that he should happen to play! We would not let Mrs. Mirvan rest till she consented to go; her chief objection was to our dress, for we have had no time to *Londonize* ourselves; but we teized her into compliance, and so we are to sit in some obscure place, that she may not be seen. As to me, I should be alike unknown in the most conspicuous or most private part of the house.

I can write no more now. I have hardly time to breathe—only just this, the houses and streets are not quite so superb as I expected. However, I have seen nothing yet; so I ought not to judge.

Well, adieu, my dearest Sir, for the present! I could not forbear writing a few words in-

stantly on my arrival; though I suppose my letter of thanks for your consent is still on the road.

Saturday Night.

O my dear Sir, in what raptures am I returned! Well may Mr. Garrick be so celebrated, so universally admired—I had not any idea of so great a performer.

Such ease! such vivacity in his manner! such grace in his motions! such fire and meaning in his eyes!—I could hardly believe he had studied a written part, for every word seemed to be uttered from the impulse of the moment.

His action—at once so graceful and so free! —his voice—so clear, so melodious, yet so wonderfully various in its tones—such animation!—every look *speaks!*

I would have given the world to have had the whole play acted over again: and when he danced—Oh, how I envied Clarinda! I almost wished to have jumped on the stage and joined them.

I am afraid you will think me mad, so I won't say any more; yet I really believe Mr. Garrick would make you mad too, if you could see him. I intend to ask Mrs. Mirvan to go to the play every night while we stay in town. She is extremely kind to me; and Maria, her charming daughter, is the sweetest girl in the world.

I shall write to you every evening all that passes in the day, and that in the same manner as, if I could see, I should tell you.

Sunday.

This morning we went to Portland chapel, and afterwards we walked in the Mall of Saint James's Park, which by no means answered my expectations: it is a long straight walk, of dirty gravel, very uneasy to the feet; and at each end, instead of an open prospect, nothing is to be seen but houses built of brick. When Mrs. Mirvan pointed out the *Palace* to me—I think I was never much more surprised.

However, the walk was very agreeable to us; everybody looked gay and seemed pleased, and the ladies were so much dressed that Miss Mirvan and I could do nothing but look at them. Mrs. Mirvan met several of her friends:—no wonder, for I never saw so many people assembled together before. I looked about for some of *my* acquaintance, but in vain, for I saw not one person that I knew; which is very odd, for all the world seemed there.

Mrs. Mirvan says we are not to walk in the Park again next Sunday, even if we should be in town, because there is better company in Kensington Gardens. But really if you had seen

how much every body was dressed, you would not think that possible.

Monday.

We are to go this evening to a private ball, given by Mrs. Stanley, a very fashionable lady of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance.

We have been *a shopping* as Mrs. Mirvan calls it, all this morning, to buy silks, caps, gauzes, and so forth.

The shops are really very entertaining, especially the mercers; there seem to be six or seven men belonging to each shop; and every one took care, by bowing and smirking, to be noticed; we were conducted from one to another, and carried from room to room with so much ceremony, that at first I was almost afraid to go on.

I thought I should never have chosen a silk; for they produced so many I knew not which to fix upon; and they recommended them all so strongly, that I fancy they thought I only wanted persuasion to buy every thing they showed me: and, indeed, they took so much trouble, that I was almost ashamed I could not.

At the milliners, the ladies we met were so much dressed, that I should rather have imagined they were making visits than purchases: but what most diverted me was, that we were more frequently served by men than by women; and such men! so finical, so affected!—they seemed

to understand every part of a woman's dress better than we do ourselves; and they recommended caps and ribbands with an air of so much importance, that I wished to ask them how long they had left off wearing them.

The dispatch with which they work in these great shops is amazing, for they have promised me a complete suit of linen against the evening.

I have just had my hair dressed. You can't think how oddly my head feels; full of powder and black pins, and a great *cushion* on the top of it. I believe you would hardly know me, for my face looks quite different to what it did before my hair was dressed. When I shall be able to make use of a comb for myself I cannot tell, for my hair is so much entangled, *frizzled* they call it, that I fear it will be very difficult.

I am half afraid of this ball to-night; for, you know, I have never danced but at school; however, Miss Mirvan says there is nothing in it: yet I wish it was over.

Adieu, my dear Sir; pray excuse the wretched stuff I write, perhaps I may improve by being in this town, and then my letters will be less unworthy your reading. Mean time I am your dutiful and affectionate, though unpolished,

EVELINA.

Poor Miss Mirvan cannot wear one of the caps she made, because they dress her hair too large for them.

LETTER XI.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Queen-Ann-Street, April 5, Tuesday Morning.

I HAVE a vast deal to say, and shall give all this morning to my pen. As to my plan of writing every evening the adventures of the day, I find it impracticable; for the diversions here are so very late, that, if I begin my letters after them, I could not go to bed at all.

We passed a most extraordinary evening. A *private* ball this was called, so I expected to have seen about four or five couple; but Lord! my dear Sir, I believe I saw half the world! Two very large rooms were full of company; in one, were cards for the elderly ladies, and in the other were the dancers. My mamma Mirvan, for she always calls me her child, said she would sit with Maria and me till we were provided with partners, and then join the card-players.

The gentlemen, as they passed and repassed, looked as if they thought we were quite at

their disposal, and only waiting for the honor of their commands; and they sauntered about, in a careless indolent manner, as if with a view to keep us in suspense. I don't speak of this in regard to Miss Mirvan and myself only, but to the ladies in general; and I thought it so provoking, that I determined in my own mind, that, far from humoring such airs, I would rather not dance at all than with any one who should seem to think me ready to accept the first partner who would condescend to take me.

Not long after, a young man, who had for some time looked at us with a kind of negligent impertinence, advanced, on tiptoe, towards me; he had a set smile on his face, and his dress was so foppish, that I really believe he even wished to be stared at; and yet he was very ugly.

Bowing almost to the ground, with a sort of swing, and waving his hand with the greatest conceit, after a short and silly pause, he said, "Madam—may I presume?"—and stopped, offering to take my hand. I drew it back, but could scarce forbear laughing. "Allow me, Madam," continued he, affectedly breaking off every half moment, "the honor and happiness—if I am not so unhappy as to address you too late—to have the happiness and honor—"

Again he would have taken my hand, but

bowing my head, I begged to be excused, and turned to Miss Mirvan to conceal my laughter. He then desired to know if I had already engaged myself to some more fortunate man? I said No, and that I believed I should not dance at all. He would keep himself, he told me, disengaged, in hopes I should relent; and then, uttering some ridiculous speeches of sorrow and disappointment, though his face still wore the same invariable smile, he retreated.

It so happened, as we have since recollected, that during this little dialogue, Mrs. Mirvan was conversing with the lady of the house: and very soon after another gentleman, who seemed about six-and-twenty years old, gaily, but not foppishly dressed, and indeed extremely handsome, with an air of mixed politeness and gallantry, desired to know if I was engaged or would honor him with my hand.—So he was pleased to say, though I am sure I know not what honor he could receive from me; but these sort of expressions, I find, are used as words of course, without any distinction of persons or study of propriety.

Well, I bowed, and I am sure I colored; for indeed I was frightened at the thoughts of dancing before so many people, all strangers, and, which was worse, *with* a stranger; however, that was unavoidable, for though I looked round

world to have seen Mrs. Mirvan, and begged of her to make my apologies; for what, thought I, can I possibly say to him in excuse for running away? he must either conclude me a fool, or half mad; for any one brought up in the great world, and accustomed to its ways, can have no idea of such sort of fears as mine.

My confusion increased when I observed that he was every where seeking me with apparent perplexity and surprise; but when, at last, I saw him move towards the place where I sat, I was ready to sink with shame and distress.—I found it absolutely impossible to keep my seat, because I could not think of a word to say for myself; and so I rose and walked hastily towards the card-room, resolving to stay with Mrs. Mirvan the rest of the evening and not to dance at all: but before I could find her, Lord Orville saw and approached me.

He begged to know if I was not well? You may easily imagine how much I was embarrassed. I made no answer, but hung my head like a fool, and looked on my fan.

He then, with an air the most respectfully serious, asked if he had been so unhappy as to offend me?

"No indeed!" cried I: and, in hopes of changing the discourse, and preventing his further inquires, I desired to know if he had

seen the young lady who had been conversing with me?

No;—but would I honor him with any commands to her?

"Oh, by no means!"

Was there any other person with whom I wished to speak?

I said *no*, before I knew I had answered at all.

Should he have the pleasure of bringing me any refreshment?

I bowed almost involuntarily; and away he flew.

I was quite ashamed of being so troublesome and so much *above* myself as these seeming airs made me appear; but indeed I was too much confused, to think or act with any consistency.

If he had not been swift as lightning, I don't know whether I should not have stolen away again; but he returned in a moment. When I had drank a glass of lemonade, he hoped, he said, that I would again honor him with my hand, as a new dance was just begun. I had not the presence of mind to say a single word, and so I let him once more lead me to the place I had left.

Shocked to find how silly—how childish a part I had acted, my former fears of dancing

before such a company, and with such a partner, returned more forcibly than ever. I suppose he perceived my uneasiness, for he intreated me to sit down again, if dancing was disagreeable to me: but I was quite satisfied with the folly I had already shown, and therefore declined his offer, though I was really scarce able to stand.

Under such conscious disadvantages, you may easily imagine, my dear Sir, how ill I acquitted myself. But, though I both expected and deserved to find him very much mortified and displeased at his ill fortune in the choice he had made, yet, to my very great relief, he appeared to be even contented, and very much assisted and encouraged me. These people in high life have too much presence of mind, I believe, to *seem* disconcerted or out of humor, however they may feel: for had I been the person of the most consequence in the room, I could not have met with more attention and respect.

When the dance was over, seing me still very much flurried, he led me to a seat, saying that he would not suffer me to fatigue myself from politeness.

And then, if my capacity—or even if my spirits had been better, in how animated a conversation might I have been engaged! It

was then I saw that the rank of Lord Orville was his least recommendation, his understanding and his manners being far more distinguished. His remarks upon the company in general were so apt, so just, so lively, I am almost surprised myself that they did not reanimate me; but indeed I was too well convinced of the ridiculous part I had myself played before so nice an observer, to be able to enjoy his pleasantry; so self-compassion gave me feeling for others: yet I had not the courage to attempt either to defend them, or to rally in my turn, but listened to him in silent embarrassment.

When he found this, he changed the subject, and talked of public places and public performers; but he soon discovered that I was totally ignorant of them.

He then, very ingeniously, turned the discourse to the amusements and occupations of the country.

It now struck me, that he was resolved to try whether or not I was capable of talking upon *any* subject: this put so great a constraint upon my thoughts, that I was unable to go further than a monosyllable; and not even so far when I could possibly avoid it.

We were sitting in this manner,—he conversing with all gaiety, I looking down with all foolishness,—when that fop who had first

asked me to dance, with a most ridiculous solemnity, approached, and after a profound bow or two, said, "I humbly beg pardon, Madam,—and of you too, my Lord,—for breaking in upon such agreeable conversation—which must, doubtless, be much more delectable—than what I have the honor to offer—but—"

I interrupted him—I blush for my folly,—with laughing; yet I could not help it, for, added to the man's stately foppishness,—and he actually took snuff between every three words,—when I looked round at Lord Orville, I saw such extreme surprise in his face,—the cause of which appeared so absurd, that I could not for my life preserve my gravity.

I had not laughed before from the time I had left Miss Mirvan, and I had much better have cried then; Lord Orville actually stared at me; the beau, I know not his name, looked quite enraged. "Refrain—Madam," said he, with an important air, "a few moments refrain!—I have but a sentence to trouble you with.—May I know to what accident I must attribute not having the honor of your hand?"

"Accident, Sir!" repeated I, much astonished.

"Yes, accident, Madam—for surely,—I must take the liberty to observe—pardon me, Madam,—it ought to be no common one—that should

tempt a lady—so young a one too,—to be guilty of ill manners."

A confused idea now for the first time entered my head, of something I had heard of the rules of an assembly; but I was never at one before, —I have only danced at school,—and so giddy and heedless I was, that I had not once considered the impropriety of refusing one partner and afterwards accepting another. I was thunderstruck at the recollection: but, while these thoughts were rushing into my head, Lord Orville, with some warmth, said, "This lady, Sir, is incapable of meriting such an accusation?"

The creature—for I am very angry with him —made a low bow, and with a grin the most malicious I ever saw, "My Lord," said he, "far be it from me to *accuse* the Lady for having the discernment to distinguish and prefer, the superior attractions of your Lordship."

Again he bowed, and walked off.

Was ever any thing so provoking? I was ready to die with shame. "What a coxcomb!" exclaimed Lord Orville; while I, without knowing what I did; rose hastily, and moving off, "I can't imagine," cried I, "where Mrs. Mirvan has hid herself!"

"Give me leave to see," answered he. I bowed and sat down again, not daring to meet his eyes;

for what must he think of me, between my blunder and the supposed preference?

He returned in a moment, and told me that Mrs. Mirvan was at cards, but would be glad to see me; and I went immediately. There was but one chair vacant, so, to my great relief, Lord Orville presently left us. I then told Mrs. Mirvan my disasters, and she good-naturedly blamed herself for not having better instructed me, but said she had taken it for granted that I must know such common customs. However, the man may, I think, be satisfied with his pretty speech, and carry his resentment no farther.

In a short time, Lord Orville returned. I consented, with the best grace I could, to go down another dance, for I had had time to recollect myself, and therefore resolved to use some exertion, and, if possible, appear less a fool than I had hitherto done; for it occurred to me that insignificant as I was, compared to a man of his rank and figure, yet, since he had been so unfortunate as to make choice of me for a partner, why—I should endeavour to make the best of it.

The dance, however, was short, and he spoke very little; so I had no opportunity of putting my resolution in practice. He was satisfied, I suppose, with his former successless efforts to draw me out: or, rather, I fancied, he had been

inquiring *who I was*. This again disconcerted me, and the spirits I had determined to exert again failed me. Tired, ashamed, and mortified, I begged to sit down till we returned home, which I did soon after. Lord Orville did me the honor to hand me to the coach, talking all the way of the honor *I* had done *him* !—Oh, these fashionable people!

Well, my dear Sir, was it not a strange evening? I could not help being thus particular, because, to me, every thing is so new. But it is now time to conclude. I am, with all love and duty,

Your

EVELINA.

LETTER XII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Tuesday, April, 5.

THERE is to be no end to the troubles of last night. I have this moment, between persuasion and laughter, gathered from Maria the most curious dialogue that ever I heard. You will, at first, be startled at my vanity; but, my dear Sir, have patience!

It must have passed while I was sitting with Mrs. Mirvan in the card-room. Maria was taking some refreshment, and saw Lord Orville advancing for the same purpose himself; but he did not know her, though she immediately recollected him. Presently after, a very gay-looking man, stepping hastily up to him, cried, "Why, my Lord, what have you done with your lovely partner?"

"*Nothing!*" answered Lord Orville, with a smile and a shrug.

"By Jove," cried the man, "she is the most beautiful creature I ever saw in my life!"

Lord Orville, as he well might, laughed, but answered—"Yes, a pretty modest-looking girl."

"Oh, my Lord!" cried the madman, "she is an angel!"

"A *silent* one," returned he.

"Why aye, my Lord! how stands she as to that? She looks all intelligence and expression."

"A poor weak girl!" answered Lord Orville, shaking his head.

"By Jove," cried the other, "I am glad to hear it!"

At that moment, the same odious creature who had been my former tormentor, joined them. Addressing Lord Orville with great respect, he said, "I beg pardon, my Lord, if I was—as I fear might be the case—rather too severe in my censure of the lady who is honored with your protection;—but, my Lord, ill-breeding is apt to provoke a man."

"Ill-breeding!" cried my unknown champion, "impossible! that elegant face can never be so vile a mask!"

"O Sir, as to that," answered he, "you must allow *me* to judge; for though I pay all deference to your opinion in other things,—yet I hope you will grant—and I appeal to your Lordship also—that I am not totally despicable as a judge of good or ill manners."

"I was so wholly ignorant," said Lord Orville, gravely, "of the provocation you might have had, that I could not but be surprised at your singular resentment."

"It was far from my intention," answered he, "to offend your Lordship; but really, for a person who is nobody to give herself such airs, —I own I could not command my passions: for, my Lord, though I have made diligent inquiry, I cannot learn who she is."

"By what I can make out," cried my defender, "she must be a country parson's daughter."

"He! he! he! very good, 'pon honor!" cried the fop,—"well, so I could have sworn by her manners."

And then, delighted at his own wit, he laughed, and went away, as I suppose, to repeat it.

"But what the deuce is all this?" demanded the other.

"Why a very foolish affair," answered Lord Orville: "your Helen first refused this coxcomb, and then—danced with me. This is all I can gather of it."

"Oh, Orville," returned he, "you are a happy man!—But, *ill-bred?*—I can never believe it! and she looks too sensible to be *ignorant*."

"Whether ignorant or mischievous, I will

not pretend to determine, but certain it is she attended to all *I* could say to her, though I have really fatigued myself with fruitless endeavours to entertain her with the most immoveable gravity; but no sooner did Lovel begin his complaint, than she was seized with a fit of laughing; first affronting the poor beau, and then enjoying his mortification."

"Ha! ha! ha! why there's some *genius* in that, my Lord, though perhaps rather *rustic*."

Here Maria was called to dance, and so heard no more.

Now, tell me, my dear Sir, did you ever know any thing more provoking? "*A poor weak girl!*" "*ignorant* or *mischievous!*" What mortifying words! I am resolved, however, that I will never again be tempted to go to an assembly. I wish I had been in Dorsetshire.

Well, after this, you will not be surprised that Lord Orville contented himself with an inquiry after our healths this morning, by his servant, without troubling himself to call, as Miss Mirvan had told me he would: but perhaps it may be only a country custom.

I would not live here for the world. I care not how soon we leave town. London soon grows tiresome. I wish the Captain would come. Mrs. Mirvan talks of the opera for this evening; however, I am very indifferent about it.

Wednesday Morning.

Well, my dear Sir, I have been pleased against my will, I could almost say, for I must own I went out in very ill-humor, which I think you cannot wonder at: but the music and the singing were charming; they soothed me into a pleasure the most grateful, the best suited to my present disposition in the world. I hope to persuade Mrs. Mirvan to go again on Saturday. I wish the opera was every night. It is, of all entertainments, the sweetest and most delightful. Some of the songs seemed to melt my very soul. It was what they call a *serious* opera, as the *comic* first singer was ill.

To-night we go to Ranelagh. If any of those three gentlemen who conversed so freely about me should be there—but I won't think of it.

Thursday Morning.

Well, my dear Sir, we went to Ranelagh. It is a charming place, and the brilliancy of the lights, on my first entrance, made me almost think I was in some inchanted castle or fairy palace; for all looked like magic to me.

The very first person I saw was Lord Orville. I felt so confused! — but he did not see me. After tea, Mrs. Mirvan being tired, Maria and

I walked round the room alone. Then again we saw him, standing by the orchestra. We, too, stopt to hear a singer. He bowed to me; I curtsied, and I am sure I colored.—We soon walked on, not liking our situation: however, he did not follow us; and when we passed by the orchestra again, he was gone. Afterwards in the course of the evening, we met him several times; but he was always with some party, and never spoke to us, though whenever he chanced to meet my eyes he condescended to bow.

I cannot but be hurt at the opinion he entertains of me. It is true, my own behaviour incurred it—yet he is himself the most agreeable, and, seemingly, the most amiable man in the world; and therefore it is that I am grieved to be thought ill of by him: for of whose esteem ought we to be ambitious, if not of those who most merit our own?—But it is too late to reflect upon this now. Well, I can't help it; —however, I think I have done with assemblies!

This morning was destined for *seeing sights*, auctions, curious shops, and so forth; but my head ached, and I was not in a humor to be amused, and so I made them go without me, though very unwillingly.—They are all kindness.

And now I am sorry I did not accompany

them, for I know not what to do with myself. I had resolved not to go to the play to-night; but I believe I shall. In short, I hardly care whether I do or not.

* * * * * * *

I thought I had done wrong! Mrs. Mirvan and Maria have been half the town over, and so entertained!—while I, like a fool, staid at home to do nothing: and, at an auction in Pall-mall, who should they meet but Lord Orville! he sat next to Mrs. Mirvan, and they talked a great deal together: but she gave me no account of the conversation.

I may never have such another opportunity of seeing London; I am quite sorry that I was not of the party; but I deserve this mortification for having indulged my ill-humor.

Thursday Night.

We are just returned from the play, which was King Lear, and has made me very sad. We did not see any body we knew.

Well, adieu, it is too late to write more.

Friday.

Captain Mirvan is arrived. I have not spirits to give an account of his introduction, for he

has really shocked me. I do not like him. He seems to be surly, vulgar, and disagreeable.

Almost the same moment that Maria was presented to him, he began same rude jests upon the bad shape of her nose, and called her a tall, ill-formed thing. She bore it with the utmost good-humor; but that kind and sweet-tempered woman, Mrs. Mirvan, deserved a better lot: I am amazed she would marry him.

For my own part, I have been so shy, that I have hardly spoken to him, or he to me. I cannot imagine why the family was so rejoiced at his return. If he had spent his whole life abroad, I should have supposed they might rather have been thankful than sorrowful:—however, I hope they do not think so ill of him as I do; at least, I am sure they have too much prudence to make it known.

Saturday Night.

We have been to the opera, and I am still more pleased than I was on Tuesday. I could have thought myself in paradise, but for the continual talking of the company around me. We sat in the pit, where every body was dressed in so high a style, that, if I had been less delighted with the performance, my eyes would

have found me sufficient entertainment from looking at the ladies.

I was very glad I did not sit next the Captain, for he could not bear the music or singers, and was extremely gross in his observations on both. When the opera was over, we went into a place called the coffee-room, where ladies as well as gentlemen assemble. There are all sorts of refreshments, and the company walk about and *chat* with the same ease and freedom as in a private room.

On Monday we go to a ridotto, and on Wednesday we return to Howard Grove. The Captain says he won't stay here to be *smoked with filth* any longer; but, having been seven years *smoked with a burning sun*, he will retire to the country, and sink into a *fair-weather chap*.

Adieu, my dear Sir.

LETTER XIII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Tuesday, April 12.

MY DEAR SIR,

WE came home from the ridotto so late, or rather so early, that it was not possible for me to write. Indeed we did not *go*,—you will be frightened to hear it,—till past eleven o'clock; but nobody does:—a terrible reverse of the order of nature! We sleep with the sun, and wake with the moon.

The room was very magnificent, the lights and decorations were brilliant, and the company gay and splendid. But I should have told you, that I made many objections to being of the party, according to the resolution I had formed. However, Maria laughed me out of my scruples, and so once again—I went to an assembly.

Miss Mirvan danced a minuet, but I had not the courage to follow her example. In our walks I saw Lord Orville. He was quite alone

but did not observe us. Yet, as he seemed of no party, I thought it was not impossible that he might join us; and though I did not wish much to dance at all—yet, as I was more acquainted with him than with any other person in the room, I must own I could not help thinking it would be infinitely more desirable to dance again with him than with an entire stranger. To be sure, after all that had passed, it was very ridiculous to suppose it even probable that Lord Orville would again honor me with his choice; yet I am compelled to confess my absurdity, by way of explaining what follows.

Miss Mirvan was soon engaged; and presently after, a very fashionable, gaylooking man, who seemed about thirty years of age, addressed himself to me, and begged to have the honor of dancing with me. Now Maria's partner was a gentleman of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance; for she had told us it was highly improper for young women to dance with strangers at any public assembly. Indeed it was by no means my wish so to do; yet I did not like to confine myself from dancing at all; neither did I dare refuse this gentleman, as I had done Mr. Lovel, and then, if any acquaintance should offer, accept him: and so, all these reasons combining, induced me to tell him—yet I blush to write it to you!—that I was *already en-*

gaged; by which I meant to keep myself at liberty to dance or not, as matters should fall out.

I suppose my consciousness betrayed my artifice, for he looked at me as if incredulous; and, instead of being satisfied with my answer, and leaving me, according to my expectation, he walked at my side, and, with the greatest ease imaginable, began a conversation in the free style which only belongs to old and intimate acquaintance. But, what was most provoking, he asked me a thousand questions concerning *the partner to whom I was engaged:* and, at last, he said, "Is it really possible that a man whom you have honored with your acceptance, can fail to be at hand to profit from your goodness?"

I felt extremely foolish, and begged Mrs. Mirvan to lead to a seat, which she very obligingly did. The Captain sat next her, and, to my great surprise, this gentleman thought proper to follow, and seat himself next to me.

"What an insensible!" continued he, "why, Madam, you are missing the most delightful dance in the world! The man must be either mad, or a fool—Which do you incline to think him yourself?"

"Neither, Sir," answered I, in some confusion.

He begged my pardon for the freedom of his supposition, saying, "I really was off my guard, from astonishment that any man can be so much and so unaccountably his own enemy. But where, Madam, can he possibly be?—has he left the room?—or has not he been in it?"

"Indeed, Sir," said I peevishly, "I know nothing of him."

"I don't wonder that you are disconcerted, Madam, it is really very provoking. The best part of the evening will be absolutely lost. He deserves not that you should wait for him."

"I do not, Sir," said I, "and I beg you not to—"

"Mortifying, indeed, Madam," interrupted he, "a lady to wait for a gentleman:—O fie! —careless fellow!—what can detain him?—Will you give me leave to seek him?"

"If you please, Sir," answered I, quite terrified lest Mrs. Mirvan should attend to him, for she looked very much surprised at seeing me enter into conversation with a stranger.

"With all my heart," cried he; "pray what coat has he on?"

"Indeed I never looked at it."

"Out upon him!" cried he; "What! did he address you in a coat not worth looking at?—What a shabby wretch!"

How ridiculous! I really could not help

laughing; which, I fear, encouraged him, for he went on.

"Charming creature!—and can you really bear ill usage with so much sweetness?—Can you, *like patience on a monument*, smile in the midst of disappointment?—For my part, though I am not the offended person, my indignation is so great, that I long to kick the fellow round the room!—unless, indeed,"—hesitating and looking earnestly at me—"unless, indeed, —it is a partner of your own *creating*?"

I was dreadfully abashed, and could not make any answer.

"But no!" cried he, again, and with warmth, "it cannot be that you are so cruel! Softness itself is painted in your eyes:—You could not, surely, have the barbarity so wantonly to trifle with my misery."

I turned away from this nonsense with real disgust. Mrs. Mirvan saw my confusion, but was perplexed what to think of it, and I could not explain to her the cause lest the Captain should hear me. I therefore proposed to walk; she consented, and we all rose; but, would you believe it? this man had the assurance to rise too, and walk close by my side, as if of my party!

"Now," cried he, "I hope we shall see this ingrate.—Is that he?"—pointing to an old man,

who was lame, "or that!"—and in this manner he asked me of whoever was old or ugly in the room. I made no sort of answer; and when he found that I was resolutely silent, and walked on as much as I could without observing him, he suddenly stamped his foot, and cried out, in a passion, "Fool! ideot! booby!"

I turned hastily toward him: "Oh, Madam!" continued he, "forgive my vehemence; but I am distracted to think there should exist a wretch who can slight a blessing for which I would forfeit my life!—Oh! that I could but meet him! I would soon—but I grow angry: pardon me, Madam, my passions are violent, and your injuries affect me!"

I began to apprehend he was a madman, and stared at him with the utmost astonishment. "I see you are moved, Madam," said he; "generous creature!—but don't be alarmed, I am cool again, I am indeed,—upon my soul I am:—I entreat you, most lovely of mortals! I entreat you to be easy."

"Indeed, Sir," said I very seriously, "I must insist upon your leaving me; you are quite a stranger to me, and I am both unused and averse to your language and your manners."

This seemed to have some effect on him: he made me a low bow, begged my pardon, and vowed he would not for the world offend me.

"Then, Sir, you must leave me," cried I.

"I am gone, Madam, I am gone!" with a most tragical air; and he marched away, a quick pace, out of sight in a moment; but before I had time to congratulate myself, he was again at my elbow.

"And could you really let me go, and not be sorry?—Can you see me suffer torments inexpressible, and yet retain all your favor for that miscreant who flies you?—Ungrateful puppy!—I could bastinado him!"

"For Heaven's sake, my dear," cried Mrs. Mirvan, "who is he talking of?"

"Indeed—I do not know, Madam," said I, "but I wish he would leave me."

"What's all that there?" cried the Captain.

The man made a low bow, and said, "Only, Sir, a slight objection which this young lady makes to dancing with me, and which I am endeavouring to obviate. I shall think myself greatly honored, if you will intercede for me."

"That lady, Sir," said the Captain coldly, "is her own mistress." And he walked sullenly on.

"You, Madam," said the man, who looked delighted, to Mrs. Mirvan, "you, I hope, will have the goodness to speak for me."

"Sir," answered she gravely, "I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with you."

"I hope when you have, Ma'am," cried he,

undaunted, "you will honor me with your approbation; but, while I am yet unknown to you, it would be truly generous in you to countenance me; and, I flatter myself, Madam, that you will not have cause to repent it."

Mrs. Mirvan, with an embarrassed air, replied, "I do not at all mean, Sir, to doubt your being a gentleman,—but,—"

"But *what*, Madam?—that doubt removed, why a *but?*"

"Well, Sir," said Mrs. Mirvan with a good-humored smile, "I will even treat you with your own plainness, and try what effect that will have on you: I must therefore tell you, once for all,—"

"Oh, pardon me Madam!" interrupted he eagerly, "you must not proceed with those words, *once for all;* no, if *I* have been too *plain,* and, though a *man,* deserve a rebuke, remember, dear ladies, that if you *copy,* you ought in justice to *excuse* me."

We both stared at the man's strange behaviour.

"Be nobler than your sex," continued he, turning to me, "honor me with one dance, and give up the ingrate who has merited so ill your patience."

Mrs. Mirvan looked with astonishment at us both. "Who does he speak of, my dear?—you never mentioned—"

"O Madam!" exclaimed he, "he was not worth mentioning—it is pity he was ever thought of: but let us forget his existence. One dance is all I solicit; permit me, Madam, the honor of this young lady's hand; it will be a favor I shall ever most gratefully acknowledge."

"Sir," answered she, "favors and strangers have with me no connexion."

"If you have hitherto," said he, "confined your benevolence to your intimate friends, suffer me to be the first for whom your charity is enlarged."

"Well, Sir! I know not what to say to you, —but—"

He stopped her *but* with so many urgent intreaties, that she at last told me I must either go down one dance, or avoid his importunities by returning home. I hesitated which alternative to choose; but this impetuous man at length prevailed, and I was obliged to consent to dance with him.

And thus was my deviation from truth punished; and thus did this man's determined boldness conquer.

During the dance, before we were too much engaged in it for conversation, he was extremely provoking about *my partner*, and tried every means in his power to make me own that I had deceived him; which, though I

would not so far humble myself as to acknowledge, was, indeed, but too obvious.

Lord Orville, I fancy, did not dance at all; he seemed to have a large acquaintance, and joined several different parties: but you will easily suppose I was not much pleased to see him, in a few minutes after I was gone, walk towards the place I had just left, and bow to and join Mrs. Mirvan!

How unlucky I thought myself, that I had not longer withstood this stranger's importunities! The moment we had gone down the dance, I was hastening away from him; but he stopped me, and said that I could by no means return to my party, without giving offence, before we had *done our duty of walking up the dance.* As I knew nothing at all of these rules and customs, I was obliged to submit to his directions; but I fancy I looked rather uneasy, for he took notice of my inattention, saying, in his free way, "Whence that anxiety?—Why are those lovely eyes perpetually averted?"

"I wish you would say no more to me, Sir," cried I peevishly, "you have already destroyed all my happiness for this evening."

"Good Heaven! what is it I have done?—How have I merited this scorn?"

"You have tormented me to death; you

have forced me from my friends, and intruded yourself upon me, against my will, for a partner."

"Surely, my dear Madam, we ought to be better friends, since there seems to be something of sympathy in the frankness of our dispositions: and yet, were you not an angel —how do you think I could brook such contempt?"

"If I have offended you," cried I, "you have but to leave me—and oh, how I wish you would!"

"My dear creature," said he, half laughing, "why, where could you be educated?"

"Where I most sincerely wish I now was!"

"How conscious you must be, all beautiful that you are, that those charming airs serve only to heighten the bloom of your complexion!"

"Your freedom, Sir, where you are more acquainted, may perhaps be less disagreeable; but to *me*—"

"You do me justice," cried he, interrupting me, "yes, I do indeed improve upon acquaintance; you will hereafter be quite charmed with me."

"Hereafter, Sir! I hope I shall never—"

"Oh, hush!—hush!—have you forgot the situation in which I found you?—Have you

forgot, that when deserted I pursued you,—when betrayed I adored you?—but for me—"

"But for you, Sir, I might, perhaps, have been happy."

"What then, am I to conclude that, *but for me*, your *partner* would have appeared?—poor fellow!—and did my presence awe him?"

"I wish *his* presence, Sir, could awe *you*!"

"His presence!—perhaps, then, you see him?"

"Perhaps, Sir, I do;" cried I, quite wearied of his raillery.

"Where?—where?—for Heaven's sake show me the wretch!"

"Wretch, Sir?"

"Oh, a very savage!—a sneaking, shamefaced, despicable puppy!"

I know not what bewitched me—but my pride was hurt, and my spirits were tired, and—in short—I had the folly, looking at Lord Orville, to repeat, "*Dispicable*, you think?"

His eyes instantly followed mine; "Why, is *that* the gentleman?"

I made no answer; I could not affirm, and I would not deny;—for I hoped to be relieved from his teizing by his mistake.

The very moment we had done what he called our duty, I eagerly desired to return to Mrs. Mirvan.

"To your *partner*, I presume Madam?" said he, very gravely.

This quite confounded me; I dreaded lest this mischievous man, ignorant of his rank, should address himself to Lord Orville, and say something which might expose my artifice.—Fool! to involve myself in such difficulties! I now feared what I had before wished; and, therefore, to *avoid* Lord Orville, I was obliged myself to *propose* going down another dance, though I was ready to sink with shame while I spoke.

"But your *partner*, Ma'am?" said he, affecting a very solemn air; "perhaps he may resent my detaining you: if you will give me leave to ask his consent—"

"Not for the universe."

"Who is he, Madam?"

I wished myself a hundred miles off. He repeated his question, "What is his name?"

"Nothing—nobody—I don't know.—"

He assumed a most important solemnity; "How! — not know?—Give me leave, my dear Madam, to recommend this caution to you; Never dance in public with a stranger, — with one whose name you are unacquainted with,—who may be a mere adventurer, — a man of no character, — consider to what impertinence you may expose yourself."

Was ever any thing so ridiculous? I could not help laughing in spite of my vexation.

At this instant, Mrs. Mirvan, followed by Lord Orville, walked up to us. You will easily believe it was not difficult for me to recover my gravity; but what was my consternation, when this strange man, destined to be the scourge of my artifice, exclaimed, "Ha! my Lord Orville! —I protest I did not know your Lordship. What can I say for my usurpation? — Yet, faith, my Lord, such a prize was not to be neglected."

My shame and confusion were unspeakable. Who could have supposed or foreseen that this man knew Lord Orville! But falshood is not more unjustifiable than unsafe.

Lord Orville — well he might! — looked all amazement.

"The philosophic coldness of your Lordship," continued this odious creature, "every man is not endowed with. I have used my utmost endeavours to entertain this lady, though I fear without success; and your Lordship will not be a little flattered, if acquainted with the difficulty which attended my procuring the honor of only one dance." Then, turning to me, who was sinking with shame, while Lord Orville stood motionless, and Mrs. Mirvan astonished, he suddenly seized my hand, saying, "Think, my Lord,

what must be my reluctance to resign this fair hand to your Lordship!"

In the same instant, Lord Orville took it of him; I colored violently, and made an effort to recover it. "You do me too much honor, Sir," cried he, with an air of gallantry, pressing it to his lips before he let it go: "however, I shall be happy to profit by it, if this lady," turning to Mrs. Mirvan, "will permit me to seek for her party."

To compel him thus to dance, I could not endure, and eagerly called out, "By no means —not for the world!—I must beg—"

"Will you honor *me*, Madam, with your commands," cried my tormentor; "may *I* seek the lady's party?"

"No, Sir," answered I, turning from him.

"What *shall* be done, my dear?" said Mrs. Mirvan.

"Nothing, Ma'am;—any thing, I mean—"

"But do you dance, or not? you see his Lordship waits."

"I hope not,—I beg that—I would not for the world—I am sure I ought to—to—"

I could not speak; but that confident man, determined to discover whether or not I had deceived him, said to Lord Orville, who stood suspended, "My Lord, this affair, which, at present, seems perplexed, I will briefly explain;

—this lady proposed to me another dance,—nothing could have made me more happy—I only wished for your Lordship's permission, which, if now granted, will, I am persuaded, set every thing right."

I glowed with indignation. "No, Sir—It is your absence, and that alone, can set every thing right."

"For Heaven's sake, my dear," cried Mrs. Mirvan, who could no longer contain her surprise, "what does all this mean?—were you pre-engaged?—had Lord Orville—"

"No, Madam, cried I,—only—only I did not know that gentleman,—and so,—and so I thought —I intended—I—"

Overpowered by all that had passed, I had not strength to make my mortifying explanation; —my spirits quite failed me, and I burst into tears.

They all seemed shocked and amazed.

"What is the matter, my dearest love?" cried Mrs. Mirvan, with the kindest concern.

"What have I done!" exclaimed my evil genius, and ran officiously for a glass of water.

However, a hint was sufficient for Lord Orville, who comprehended all I would have explained. He immediately led me to a seat, and said, in a low voice, "Be not distressed, I beseech

you; I shall ever think my name honored by your making use of it."

This politeness relieved me. A general murmur had alarmed Miss Mirvan, who flew instantly to me; while Lord Orville, the moment Mrs. Mirvan had taken the water, led my tormentor away.

"For Heaven's sake, dear Madam!" cried I, "let me go home:—indeed, I cannot stay here any longer."

"Let us all go!" cried my kind Maria.

"But the Captain — what will he say? I had better go home in a chair."

Mrs. Mirvan consented, and I rose to depart. Lord Orville and that man both came to me. The first, with an attention I had but ill merited from him, led me to a chair; while the other followed, pestering me with apologies. I wished to have made mine to Lord Orville, but was too much ashamed.

It was about one o'clock. Mrs. Mirvan's servants saw me home.

And now,—what again shall ever tempt me to an assembly? I dread to hear what you will think of me, my most dear and honored Sir: you will need your utmost partiality, to receive me without displeasure.

This morning Lord Orville has sent to inquire after our healths: and Sir Clement Willoughby,

for that, I find, is the name of my persecutor, has called: but I would not go down stairs till he was gone.

And now, my dear Sir, I can somewhat account for the strange, provoking, and ridiculous conduct of this Sir Clement, last night; for Miss Mirvan says he is the very man with whom she heard Lord Orville conversing at Mrs. Stanley's, when I was spoken of in so mortifying a manner. He was pleased to say he was glad to hear I was a fool; and therefore, I suppose, he concluded he might talk as much nonsense as he pleased to me: however, I am very indifferent as to his opinion;—but for Lord Orville,—if then he thought me an ideot, now, I am sure, he must suppose me both bold and presuming. Make use of his name!—what impertinence!—he can never know how it happened,—he can only imagine it was from an excess of vanity:—well, however, I shall leave this bad city to-morrow, and never again will I enter it!

The Captain intends to take us to-night to the Fantocini. I cannot bear that Captain; I can give you no idea how gross he is. I heartily rejoice that he was not present at the disagreeable conclusion of yesterday's adventure, for I am sure he would have contributed to my confusion; which might perhaps have diverted him, as he

seldom or never smiles but at some other person's expense.

And here I conclude my London letters, — and without any regret; for I am too inexperienced and ignorant to conduct myself with propriety in this town, where every thing is new to me, and many things are unaccountable and perplexing.

Adieu, my dear Sir! Heaven restore me safely to you! I wish I was to go immediately to Berry Hill; yet the wish is ungrateful to Mrs. Mirvan, and therefore I will repress it. I shall write an account of the Fantocini from Howard Grove. We have not been to half the public places that are now open, though I dare say you will think we have been to all: but they are almost as innumerable as the persons who fill them.

LETTER XIV.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Queen-Ann-Street, April 13.

HOW much will you be surprised, my dearest Sir, at receiving another letter from London of your Evelina's writing! But, believe me, it was not my fault, neither is it my happiness, that I am still here: our journey has been postponed by an accident equally unexpected and disagreeable.

We went last night to see the Fantocini, where we had infinite entertainment from the performance of a little comedy, in French and Italian, by puppets, so admirably managed, that they both astonished and diverted us all, except the Captain, who has a fixed and most prejudised hatred of whatever is not English.

When it was over, while we waited for the coach, a tall elderly woman brushed quickly past us, calling out, "My God! what shall I do?"

"Why, what *would* you do?" cried the Captain.

"*Ma foi, Monsieur,*" answered she, "I have lost my company; and in this place I don't know nobody."

There was something foreign in her accent, though it was difficult to discover whether she was an English or a French woman. She was very well dressed, and seemed so entirely at a loss what to do, that Mrs. Mirvan proposed to the Captain to assist her.

"Assist her!" cried he, "aye, with all my heart;—let a link-boy call her a coach."

There was not one to be had, and it rained very fast.

"*Mon Dieu,*" exclaimed the stranger, "what shall become of me? *Je suis au desespoir!*"

"Dear Sir," cried Miss Mirvan, "pray let us take the poor lady into our coach. She is quite alone, and a foreigner—."

"She's never the better for that," answered he: "she may be a woman of the town, for any thing you know."

"She does not appear such," said Mrs. Mirvan, "and indeed she seems so much distressed, that we shall but follow the golden rule, if we carry her to her lodgings."

"You are mighty fond of new acquaintance," returned he, "but first let us know if she be going our way."

Upon inquiry, we found that she lived in

Oxford Road; and, after some disputing, the Captain, surlily, and with a very bad grace, consented to admit her into his coach; though he soon convinced us, that he was determined she should not be too much obliged to him, for he seemed absolutely bent upon quarrelling with her: for which strange inhospitality, I can assign no other reason than that she appeared to be a foreigner.

The conversation began by her telling us that she had been in England only two days; that the gentlemen belonging to her were Parisians, and had left her to see for a hackney-coach, as her own carriage was abroad; and that she had waited for them till she was quite frightened, and concluded that they had lost themselves.

"And pray," said the Captain, "why did you go to a public place without an Englishman?"

"*Ma foi*, Sir," answered she, "because none of my acquaintance is in town."

"Why then," said he, "I'll tell you what; your best way is to go out of it yourself."

"*Pardi, Monsieur*," returned she, "and so I shall; for, I promise you, I think the English a parcel of brutes; and I'll go back to France as fast as I can, for I would not live among none of you."

"Who wants you?" cried the Captain; "do you suppose, Madam French, we have not enough of other nations to pick our pockets already! I'll warrant you, there's no need for you for to put in your oar."

"Pick your pockets, Sir! I wish nobody wanted to pick your pockets no more than I do; and I'll promise you, you'd be safe enough. But there's no nation under the sun can beat the English for ill-politeness; for my part, I hate the very sight of them, and so I shall only just visit a person of quality or two, of my particular acquaintance, and then I shall go back again to France."

"Aye, do;" cried he, "and then go to the devil together; for that's the fittest voyage for the French and the quality."

"We'll take care, however," cried the stranger, with great vehemence, "not to admit none of your vulgar unmannered English among us."

"Oh, never fear," returned he coolly, "we shan't dispute the point with you; you and the quality may have the devil all to yourselves."

Desirous of changing the subject of a conversation which now became very alarming, Miss Mirvan called out, "Lord, how slow the man drives!"

"Never mind, Moll," said her father, "I'll warrant you he'll drive fast enough to-morrow, when you are going to Howard Grove."

"To Howard Grove!" exclaimed the stranger; "why, *mon Dieu!* do you know Lady Howard?"

"Why, what if we do?" answered he, "that's nothing to you; she's none of *your* quality, I'll promise you."

"Who told you that," cried she, "you don't know nothing about the matter; besides, you're the ill-bredest person ever I see; and as to your knowing Lady Howard, I don't believe no such a thing; unless, indeed, you are her steward."

The Captain, swearing terribly, said, with great fury, "*you* would much sooner be taken for her wash-woman."

"Her wash-woman, indeed!—Ha, ha, ha!—why you han't no eyes; did you ever see a wash-woman in such a gown as this?—besides, I'm no such mean person, for I'm as good as Lady Howard, and as rich too; and besides, I'm now come to England to visit her."

"You may spare yourself that there trouble," said the Captain, "she has paupers enough about her already,"

"Paupers, Mister!—no more a pauper than yourself, nor so much neither;—but you are

a low, dirty fellow, and I shan't stoop to take no more notice of you."

"Dirty fellow!" exclaimed the Captain, seizing both her wrists, "hark you, Mrs. Frog, you'd best hold your tongue, for I must make bold to tell you, if you don't, that I shall make no ceremony of tripping you out of the window; and there you may lie in the mud till some of your *Monseers* come to help you out of it."

Their increasing passion quite terrified us; and Mrs. Mirvan was beginning to remonstrate with the Captain, when we were all silenced by what follows.

"Let me go, villain that you are, let me go! or I'll promise you, I'll get you put to prison for this usage; I'm no common person, I assure you: and, *ma foi!* I'll go to Justice Fielding about you; for I'm a person of fashion, and I'll make you know it, or my name i'n't Duval."

I heard no more: amazed, frightened, and unspeakably shocked, an involuntary exclamation of *Gracious Heaven!* escaped me, and, more dead than alive, I sunk into Mrs. Mirvan's arms. But let me draw a veil over a scene too cruel for a heart so compassionately tender as yours; it is sufficient that you know this supposed foreigner proved to be Madame Duval —the grandmother of your Evelina!

Oh, Sir! to discover so near relation in a woman who had thus introduced herself!—what would become of me, were it not for you, my protector, my friend, and my refuge?

My extreme concern and Mrs. Mirvan's surprise immediately betrayed me. But I will not shock you with the manner of her acknowledging me, or the bitterness, the *grossness*—I cannot otherwise express myself,—with which she spoke of those unhappy past transactions you have so pathetically related to me. All the misery of a much-injured parent,—dear, though never seen; regretted, though never known—crowded so forcibly upon my memory, that they rendered this interview—one only excepted—the most afflicting I can ever know.

When we stopped at her lodgings, she desired me to accompany her into the house, and said she could easily procure a room for me to sleep in: alarmed and trembling, I turned to Mrs. Mirvan.—"My daughter, Madam," said that sweet woman, "cannot so abruptly part with her young friend; you must allow a little time to wean them from each other."

"Pardon me, Ma'am," answered Madame Duval, who, from the time of her being known, somewhat softened her manners; "Miss can't possibly be so nearly connected to this child as I am."

"No matter for that," cried the Captain, who espoused my cause to satisfy his own pique, though an awkward apology had passed between them, "she was sent to us; and so, d'ye see, we don't choose for to part with her."

I promised to wait upon her at what time she pleased the next day, and, after a short debate, she desired me to breakfast with her and we proceeded to Queen-Ann-street.

What an unfortunate adventure!—I could not close my eyes the whole night. A thousand times I wished I had never left Berry Hill; however, my return thither shall be accelerated to the utmost of my power; and, once more in that abode of tranquil happiness, I will suffer no temptation to allure me elsewhere.

Mrs. Mirvan was so kind as to accompany me to Madame Duval's house this morning. The Captain, too, offered his service; which I declined, from a fear she should suppose I meant to insult her.

She frowned most terribly upon Mrs. Mirvan, but she received me with as much tenderness as I believe she is capable of feeling. Indeed, our meeting seems really to have affected her; for when, overcome by the variety of emotions which the sight of her occasioned, I almost fainted in her arms, she burst into tears, and said, "Let me not lose my poor daughter a

second time!" This unexpected humanity softened me extremely; but she very soon excited my warmest indignation, by the ungrateful mention she made of the best of men,—my dear and most generous benefactor. However, grief and anger mutually gave way to terror, upon her avowing the intention of her visiting England was to make me return with her to France. This, she said, was a plan she had formed from the instant she had heard of my birth, which, she protested, did not reach her ears till I must have been twelve years of age; but Monsieur Duval, who, she declared, was the worst husband in the world, would not permit her to do any thing she wished: he had been dead but three months, which had been employed in arranging certain affairs that were no sooner settled, than she set off for England. She was already out of mourning, for she said nobody here could tell how long she had been a widow.

She must have been married very early in life; what her age is I do not know, but she really looks to be less than fifty. She dresses very gaily, paints very high, and the traces of former beauty are still very visible in her face.

I know not when, or how, this visit would have ended, had not the Captain called for Mrs. Mirvan, and absolutely insisted upon my

attending her. He is become, very suddenly, so warmly my friend, that I quite dread his officiousness. Mrs. Mirvan, however, whose principal study seems to be healing those wounds which her husband inflicts, appeased Madame Duval's wrath, by a very polite invitation to drink tea and spend the evening here. Not without great difficulty was the Captain prevailed upon to defer his journey some time longer; but what could be done? it would have been indecent for me to have quitted town the very instant I discovered that Madame Duval was in it; and to have staid here solely under her protection—Mrs. Mirvan, thank Heaven! was too kind for such a thought; that she would follow us to Howard Grove, I almost equally dreaded: it is, therefore, determined that we remain in London for some days, or a week: though the Captain has declared that the *old French hag*, as he is pleased to call her, shall fare never the better for it.

My only hope, is to get safe to Berry Hill; where, counselled and sheltered by you. I shall have nothing more to fear. Adieu, my ever dear and most honored Sir! I shall have no happiness till I am again with you!

LETTER XV.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry Hill, April 26.

IN the belief and hope that my Evelina would ere now have bid adieu to London, I had intended to have deferred writing till I heard of her return to Howard Grove; but the letter I have this moment received, with intelligence of Madame Duval's arrival in England, demands an immediate answer.

Her journey hither equally grieves and alarms me: how much did I pity my child, when I read of a discovery at once so unexpected and unwished! I have long dreaded this meeting and its consequence; to claim you, seems naturally to follow acknowledging you: I am well acquainted with her disposition, and have for many years foreseen the contest which now threatens us.

Cruel as are the circumstances of this affair, you must not, my love, suffer it to depress your spirits; remember, that while life is lent me, I will devote it to your service; and, for future

time, I will make such provision as shall seem to me most conducive to your future happiness. Secure of my protection, and relying on my tenderness, let no apprehensions of Madame Duval disturb your peace; conduct yourself towards her with all the respect and deference due to so near a relation; remembering always, that the failure of duty on her part can by no means justify any neglect on yours: indeed, the more forcibly you are struck with improprieties and misconduct in another, the greater should be your observance and diligence to avoid even the shadow of similar errors. Be careful, therefore, that no remissness of attention, no indifference of obliging, make known to her the independence I assure you of;—but when she fixes the time for her leaving England, trust to me the task of refusing your attending her: disagreeable to myself I own it will be, yet to you it would be improper, if not impossible.

In regard to her opinion of me, I am more sorry than surprised at her determined blindness; the palliation which she feels the want of, for her own conduct, leads her to seek for failings in all who were concerned in those unhappy transactions which she has so much reason to lament: and this, as it is the cause, so we must in some measure consider it as the excuse of her inveteracy.

How grateful to me are your wishes to return to Berry Hill! your lengthened stay in London, and the dissipation in which I find you are involved, fill me with uneasiness:—I mean not, however, that I would have you sequester yourself from the party to which you belong, since Mrs. Mirvan might thence infer a reproof which your youth and her kindness would render inexcusable. I will not, therefore, enlarge upon this subject, but content myself with telling you that I shall heartily rejoice when I hear of your safe arrival at Howard Grove; for which place I hope you will be preparing at the time you receive this letter.

I cannot too much thank you, my best Evelina, for the minuteness of your communications; continue to me this indulgence, for I should be miserable if in ignorance of your proceedings.

How new to you is the scene of life in which you are now engaged;—balls—plays—operas—ridottos—ah, my child! at your return hither, how will you bear the change? My heart trembles for your future tranquillity.—Yet I will hope every thing from the unsullied whiteness of your soul, and the native liveliness of your disposition.

I am sure I need not say, how much more I was pleased with the mistakes of your inex-

perience at the private ball, than with the attempted adoption of more fashionable manners at the ridotto: but your confusion and mortifications were such as to entirely silence all reproofs on my part.

I hope you will see no more of Sir Clement Willoughby, whose conversation and boldness are extremely disgustful to me. I was gratified by the goodnature of Lord Orville, upon your making use of his name; but I hope you will never again put it to such a trial.

Heaven bless thee, my dear child! and grant that neither misfortune nor vice may ever rob thee of that gaiety of heart, which, resulting from innocence, while it constitutes your own, contributes also to the felicity of all who know you!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XVI.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Queen-Ann-Street, Thursday morning, April 14.

BEFORE our dinner was over yesterday, Madame Duval came to tea: though it will lessen your surprise, to hear that it was near five o'clock, for we never dine till the day is almost over. She was asked into another room, while the table was cleared, and then was invited to partake of the desert.

She was attended by a French gentleman, whom she introduced by the name of Monsieur Du Bois: Mrs. Mirvan received them both with her usual politeness; but the Captain looked very much displeased, and after a short silence, very sternly said to Madame Duval, "Pray who asked you to bring that there spark with you?"

"Oh," cried she, "I never go nowhere without him."

Another short silence ensued, which was terminated by the Captain's turning roughly to the

foreigner, and saying, "Do you know, *Monseer*, that you're the first Frenchman I ever let come into my house?"

Monsieur Du Bois made a profound bow. He speaks no English, and understands it so imperfectly, that he might possibly imagine he had received a compliment.

Mrs. Mirvan endeavoured to divert the Captain's illhumor, by starting new subjects; but he left to her all the trouble of supporting them, and leaned back in his chair in gloomy silence, except when any opportunity offered of uttering some sarcasm upon the French. Finding her efforts to render the evening agreeable were fruitless, Mrs. Mirvan proposed a party to Ranelagh. Madame Duval joyfully consented to it; and the Captain, though he railed against the dissipation of the women, did not oppose it; and therefore Maria and I ran up stairs to dress ourselves.

Before we were ready, word was brought us that Sir Clement Willoughby was in the drawing-room. He introduced himself under the pretence of inquiring after all our healths, and entered the room with the easy air of an old acquaintance; though Mrs. Mirvan confesses that he seemed embarrassed, when he found how coldly he was received, not only by the Captain but by herself.

I was extremely disconcerted at the thoughts of seeing this man again, and did not go down stairs till I was called to tea. He was then deeply engaged in a discourse upon French manners with Madame Duval and the Captain; and the subject seemed so entirely to engross him, that he did not, at first, observe my entrance into the room. Their conversation was supported with great vehemence; the Captain roughly maintaining the superiority of the English in every particular, and Madame Duval warmly refusing to allow of it in any; while Sir Clement exerted all his powers of argument and of ridicule to second and strengthen whatever was advanced by the Captain: for he had the sagacity to discover, that he could take no method so effectual for making the master of the house his friend, as to make Madame Duval his enemy: and, indeed, in a very short time, he had reason to congratulate himself upon his successful discernment.

As soon as he saw me, he made a most respectful bow, and hoped I had not suffered from the fatigue of the ridotto: I made no other answer than a slight inclination of the head, for I was very much ashamed of that whole affair. He then returned to the disputants, where he managed the argument so skilfully, at once provoking Madame Duval, and delighting the

Captain, that I could not forbear admiring his address, though I condemned his subtlety.—Mrs. Mirvan, dreading such violent antagonists, attempted frequently to change the subject; and she might have succeeded, but for the interposition of Sir Clement, who would not suffer it to be given up, and supported it with such humor and satire, that he seems to have won the Captain's heart; though their united forces so enraged and overpowered Madame Duval, that she really trembled with passion.

I was very glad when Mrs. Mirvan said it was time to be gone. Sir Clement arose to take leave; but the Captain very cordially invited him to join our party: he *had* an engagement, he said, but would give it up to have that pleasure.

Some little confusion ensued in regard to our manner of setting off: Mrs. Mirvan offered Madame Duval a place in her coach, and proposed that we four females should go all together: however, this she rejected, declaring she would by no means go so far without a gentleman, and wondering so polite a lady could make *so English* a proposal. Sir Clement Willoughby said his chariot was waiting at the door, and begged to know if it could be of any use. It was, at last, decided, that a hackney-coach should be called for Monsieur Du Bois and

Madame Duval, in which the Captain, and, at his request, Sir Clement, went also; Mrs. and Miss Mirvan and I had a peaceful and comfortable ride by ourselves.

I doubt not but they quarrelled all the way; for when we met at Ranelagh, every one seemed out of humor: and, though we joined parties, poor Madame Duval was avoided as much as possible by all but me.

The room was so very much crowded, that, but for the uncommon assiduity of Sir Clement Willoughby, we should not have been able to procure a box, which is the name given to the arched recesses that are appropriated for tea-parties, till half the company had retired. As we were taking possession of our places, some ladies of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance stopped to speak to her, and persuaded her to *take a round* with them. When she returned to us, what was my surprise to see that Lord Orville had joined her party! The ladies walked on; Mrs. Mirvan seated herself, and made a slight though respectful invitation to Lord Orville to drink his tea with us, which, to my no small consternation, he accepted.

I felt a confusion unspeakable at again seeing him, from the recollection of the ridotto adventure: nor did my situation lessen it, for I was seated between Madame Duval and Sir

Clement, who seemed as little as myself to desire Lord Orville's presence. Indeed, the continual wrangling and illbreeding of Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval made me blush that I belonged to them; and poor Mrs. Mirvan and her amiable daughter had still less reason to be satisfied.

A general silence ensued after he was seated: his appearance, from different motives, gave an universal restraint to every body. What his own reasons were for honoring us with his company, I cannot imagine; unless, indeed, he had a curiosity to know whether I should invent any new impertinence concerning him.

The first speech was made by Madame Duval, who said, "It's quite a shocking thing to see ladies come to so genteel a place as Ranelagh with hats on; it has a monstrous vulgar look: I can't think what they wear them for. There's no such a thing to be seen in Paris."

"Indeed," cried Sir Clement, "I must own myself no advocate for hats; I am sorry the ladies ever invented or adopted so tantalising a fashion; for, where there is beauty, they only serve to shade it; and where there is none, to excite a most unavailing curiosity: I fancy they were originally worn by some young and whimsical coquet."

"More likely," answered the Captain, "they were invented by some wrinkled old hag, who'd

a mind for to keep the young fellows in chace, let them be never so weary."

"I don't know what you may do in England," cried Madame Duval, "but I know in Paris no woman needn't be at such a trouble as that, to be taken very genteel notice of."

"Why, will you pretend for to say," returned the Captain, "that they don't distinguish the old from the young there as well as here?"

"They don't make no distinguishments at all," said she; "they're vastly too polite."

"More fools they!" cried the Captain, sneeringly.

"Would to Heaven," cried Sir Clement, "that, for our own sakes, we Englishmen too were blest with so accommodating a blindness!"

"Why the devil do you make such a prayer as that?" demanded the Captain: "them are the first foolish words I've heard you speak; but I suppose you're not much used to that sort of work. Did you ever make a prayer before, since you were a sniveller?"

"Aye, now," cried Madame Duval, "that's another of the unpolitenesses of you English,—to go to talking of such things as that: now, in Paris, nobody never says nothing about religion, no more than about politics."

"Why, then," answered he, "it's a sign they take no more care of their souls than of

their country, and so both one and t'other go to old Nick."

"Well; if they do," said she, "who's the worse, so long as they don't say nothing about it? it's the tiresomest thing in the world to be always talking of them sort of things, and nobody that's ever been abroad troubles their heads about them.

"Pray, then," cried the Captain," since you know so much of the matter, be so good as to tell us what they *do* trouble their heads about? —hay, Sir Clement! ha'n't we a right to know that much?"

"A very comprehensive question," said Sir Clement; "and I expect much instruction from the lady's answer."

"Come, Madam," continued the Captain, "never flinch; speak at once; don't stop for thinking."

"I assure you I am not going," answered she; for as to what they *do* do,—why, they've enough to do, I promise you, what with one thing or another."

"But *what*—*what* do they do, these famous *Monseers*?" demanded the Captain; "can't you tell us? do they game?—or drink?—or fiddle? —or are they jockies?—or do they spend all their time in flummering old women?"

"As to that, Sir!—but indeed I shan't trouble

myself to answer such a parcel of low questions, so don't ask me no more about it." And then, to my great vexation, turning to Lord Orville, she said, "Pray, Sir, was you ever in Paris?"

He only bowed.

"And pray, Sir, how did you like it?"

This *comprehensive* question, as Sir Clement would have called it, though it made him smile, also made him hesitate; however, his answer was expressive of his approbation.

"I thought you would like it, Sir, because you look so like a gentleman. As to the Captain, and as to that other gentleman, why they may very well not like what they don't know: for I suppose, Sir, you was never abroad?"

"Only three years, Ma'am," answered Sir Clement, drily.

"Well, that's very surprising! I should never have thought it: however, I dare say you only kept company with the English."

"Why pray, who *should* he keep company with?" cried the Captain: "what, I suppose you'd have him ashamed of his own nation, like some other poplé not a thousand miles off, on purpose to make his own nation ashamed of him?"

"I'm sure it would be a very good thing if you'd go abroad yourself."

"How will you make out that,—hay, Madam?

come, please to tell me, where wou'd be the good of that?"

"Where! why a great deal. They'd make quite another person of you."

"What, I suppose you'd have me learn to cut capers?—and dress like a monkey?—and palaver in French gibberish?—hay, would you?—and powder, and daub, and make myself up, like some other folks?"

"I would have you learn to be more politer, Sir, and not to talk to ladies in such a rude, old-fashion way as this. You, Sir, as have been in Paris," again addressing herself to Lord Orville, "can tell this English gentleman how he'd be despised, if he was to talk in such an ungenteel manner as this before any foreigners. Why there isn't a hair-dresser, nor a shoe-maker, nor nobody, that wou'dn't blush to be in your company."

"Why, look ye, Madam!" answered the Captain, "as to your hair-pinchers and shoeblacks, you may puff off their manners, and welcome; and I am heartily glad you like e'm so well; but as to me, since you must needs make so free of your advice, I must e'en tell you, I never kept company with any such gentry."

"Come, ladies and gentlemen," said Mrs. Mirvan, "as many of you as have done tea, I invite to walk with me." Maria and I started up

instantly; Lord Orville followed; and I question whether we were not half round the room ere the angry disputants knew that we had left the box.

As the husband of Mrs. Mirvan had borne so large a share in this disagreeable altercation, Lord Orville forbore to make any comments upon it; so that the subject was immediately dropped, and the conversation became calmly sociable and politely cheerful, and, to everybody but me, must have been highly agreeable:—but, as to myself, I was so eagerly desirous of making some apology to Lord Orville for the impertinence of which he must have thought me guilty at the ridotto, and yet so utterly unable to assume sufficient courage to speak to him concerning an affair in which I had so terribly exposed myself, that I hardly ventured to say a word all the time we were walking; besides, the knowledge of his contemptuous opinion haunted and dispirited me, and made me fear he might possibly misconstrue whatever I should say: so that, far from enjoying a conversation which might at any other time have delighted me, I continued silent, uncomfortable, and ashamed. O Sir! shall I ever again involve myself in so foolish an embarrassment? I am sure that, if I do, I shall deserve yet greater mortification.

We were not joined by the rest of the party

till we had taken three or four turns round the room; and then they were so quarrelsome, that Mrs. Mirvan complained of being fatigued, and proposed going home. No one dissented. Lord Orville joined another party, having first made an offer of his services, which the gentlemen declined; and we proceeded to an outward room, where we waited for the carriages. It was settled that we should return to town in the same manner we came to Ranelagh; and, accordingly, Monsieur Du Bois handed Madame Duval into a hackney-coach, and was just preparing to follow her, when she screamed and jumped hastily out, declaring she was wet through all her clothes:—indeed, upon examination, the coach was found to be in a dismal condition; for the weather proved very bad, and the rain had, though I know not how, made its way into the carriage.

Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, and myself, were already disposed of as before; but no sooner did the Captain hear this account, than, without any ceremony, he was so civil as to immediately take possession of the vacant seat in his own coach, leaving Madame Duval and Monsieur Du Bois to take care of themselves: as to Sir Clement Willoughby, his own chariot was in waiting.

I instantly begged permission to offer Madame

Duval my own place, and made a motion to get out; but Mrs. Mirvan stopped me, saying that I should then be obliged to return to town with only the foreigner or Sir Clement.

"Oh, never mind the old beldame," cried the Captain, "she's weather-proof, I'll answer for her; and besides, as we are all, I hope, *English*, why she'll meet with no worse than she expects from us."

"I do not mean to defend her," said Mrs. Mirvan; "but indeed, as she belongs to our party, we cannot with any decency leave the place, till she is by some means accommodated."

"Lord, my dear!" cried the Captain, whom the distress of Madame Duval had put into very good humor, "why, she'll break her heart if she meets with any civility from a filthy Englishman."

Mrs. Mirvan, however, prevailed; and we all got out of the coach, to wait till Madame Duval could meet with some better carriage. We found her, attended by Monsieur Du Bois, standing amongst the servants, and very busy in wiping her negligee, and endeavouring to save it from being stained by the wet, as she said it was a new Lyons silk. Sir Clement Willoughby offered her the use of his chariot, but she had been too much piqued by his raillery to accept it. We waited some time, but in vain, for no hackney-

coach could be procured. The Captain at last was persuaded to accompany Sir Clement himself, and we four females were handed into Mrs. Mirvan's carriage; though not before Madame Duval had insisted upon our making room for M. Du Bois, to which the Captain only consented in preference to being incommoded by him in Sir Clement's chariot.

Our party drove off first. We were silent and unsociable; for the difficulties attending this arrangement had made every one languid and fatigued: unsociable, I must own, we continued; but very short was the duration of our silence, as we had not proceeded thirty yards, before every voice was heard at once,—for the coach broke down! I suppose we concluded, of course, that we were all half killed, by the violent shrieks that seemed to come from every mouth. The chariot was stopped, the servants came to our assistance, and we were taken out of the carriage without having been at all hurt. The night was dark and wet; but I had scarce touched the ground, when I was lifted suddenly from it by Sir Clement Willoughby, who begged permission to assist me, though he did not wait to have it granted, but carried me in his arms back to Ranelagh.

He inquired very earnestly if I was not hurt by the accident? I assured him I was perfectly

safe, and free from injury; and desired he would leave me, and return to the rest of the party, for I was very uneasy to know whether they had been equally fortunate. He told me he was happy in being honored with my commands, and would joyfully execute them; but insisted upon first conducting me to a warm room, as I had not wholly escaped being wet. He did not regard my objections, but made me follow him to an apartment, where we found an excellent fire, and some company waiting for carriages. I readily accepted a seat, and then begged he would go.

And go, indeed, he did; but he returned in a moment, telling me that the rain was more violent than ever, and that he had sent his servants to offer their assistance, and acquaint *the Mirvans* of my situation. I was very mad that he would not go himself; but as my acquaintance with him was so very slight, I did not think proper to urge him contrary to his inclination.

Well, he drew a chair close to mine, and, after again inquiring how I did, said, in a low voice, "You will pardon me, Miss Anville, if the eagerness I feel to vindicate myself induces me to snatch this opportunity of making sincere acknowledgments for the impertinence with which I tormented you at the last ridotto. I can assure

you, Madam, I have been a true and sorrowful penitent ever since; but—shall I tell you honestly what encouraged me to—"

He stopped; but I said nothing, for I thought instantly of the conversation Miss Mirvan had overheard, and supposed he was going to tell me himself what part Lord Orville had borne in it; and really I did not wish to hear it repeated: indeed, the rest of his speech convinces me that such was his intention; with what view, I know not, except to make a merit of his defending me.

"And yet," he continued, "my excuse may only expose my own credulity, and want of judgment and penetration: I will, therefore, merely beseech your pardon; and hope that some future time—"

Just then the door was opened by Sir Clement's servant, and I had the pleasure of seeing the Captain, Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, enter the room.

"Oh, ho!" cried the former, "you have got a good warm birth here; but we shall beat up your quarters. Here, Lucy, Moll, come to the fire, and dry your trumpery. But! hey-day!—why, where's old Madam French?"

"Good God!" cried I, "is not Madame Duval, then, with you?"

"With me! No,—thank God!"

I was very uneasy to know what might have become of her, and, if they would have suffered me, I should have gone out in search of her myself; but all the servants were dispatched to find her, and the Captain said we might be very sure her *French beau* would take care of her.

We waited some time without any tidings, and were soon the only party in the room. My uneasiness increased so much, that Sir Clement now made a voluntary offer of seeking her: however, the same moment that he opened the door with this design, she presented herself at it, attended by Monsieur Du Bois.

"I was this instant, Madam!" said he,—"coming to see for you."

"You are mighty good, truly!" cried she, "to come when all the mischief's over."

She then entered, — in such a condition! — entirely covered with mud, and in so great a rage, it was with difficulty she could speak. We all expressed our concern, and offered our assistance,—except the Captain; who no sooner beheld her, than he burst into a loud laugh.

We endeavoured, by our inquiries and condolements, to prevent her attending to him; and she was, for some time, so wholly engrossed by her anger and her distress, that we succeeded without much trouble. We begged her to in-

form us how this accident had happened. "How!" repeated she,—"why it was all along of your all going away;—and there's poor Monsieur Du Bois—but it wasn't his fault,—for he's as bad off as me."

All eyes were then turned to Monsieur Du Bois, whose clothes were in the same miserable plight with those of Madame Duval, and who, wet, shivering, and disconsolate, had crept to the fire.

The Captain laughed yet more heartily; while Mrs. Mirvan, ashamed of his rudeness, repeated her inquiries to Madame Duval; who, answered, "Why, as we were a-coming along, all in the rain, Monsieur Du Bois was so obliging,—though I'm sure it was an unlucky obligingness for me,—as to lift me up in his arms, to carry me over a place that was ancle-deep in mud; but instead of my being ever the better for it, just as we were in the worst part,—I'm sure I wish we had been fifty miles off!—for, somehow or other, his foot slipped,—at least, I suppose so,—though I can't think how it happened, for I'm no such great weight,—but, however that was, down we both came together, all in the mud; and the more we tried to get up, the more deeper we got covered with the nastiness—and my new Lyons negligee, too, quite spoiled!—however, it's well

we got up at all, for we might have laid there till now, for aught you all cared; for nobody never came near us."

This recital put the Captain into an ecstasy; he went from the lady to the gentleman, and from the gentleman to the lady, to enjoy alternately the sight of their distress: he really shouted with pleasure; and, shaking Monsieur Du Bois strenuously by the hand, wished him joy of having *touched English ground!* and then he held a candle to Madame Duval, that he might have a more complete view of her disaster, declaring repeatedly that he had never been better pleased in his life.

The rage of poor Madame Duval was unspeakable; she dashed the candle out of his hand, stamped upon the floor, and, at last, spit in his face.

This action seemed immediately to calm them both, as the joy of the Captain was converted into resentment, and the wrath of Madame Duval into fear; for he put his hands upon her shoulders, and gave her so violent a shake, that she screamed out for help; assuring her, at the same time, that, if she had been one ounce less old or less ugly, she should have had it all returned on her own face.

Monsieur Du Bois, who had seated himself very quietly at the fire, approached them, and

expostulated very warmly with the Captain; but he was neither understood nor regarded, and Madame Duval was not released till she quite sobbed with passion.

When they were parted, I entreated her to permit the woman who has the charge of the ladies clokes to assist in drying her clothes; she consented, and we did what was possible to save her from catching cold. We were obliged to wait in this disagreeable situation near an hour, before a hackney-coach could be found; and then we were disposed in the same manner as before our accident.

I am going this morning to see poor Madame Duval, and to inquire after her health, which I think must have suffered by her last night's misfortunes; though, indeed, she seems to be naturally strong and hearty.

Adieu, my dear Sir, till to-morrow.

LETTER XVII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Friday Morning, April 15.

Sir Clement Willoughby called here yesterday at noon, and Captain Mirvan invited him to dinner: for my part, I spent the day in a manner the most uncomfortable imaginable.

I found Madame Duval at breakfast in bed, though Monsieur Du Bois was in the chamber; which so much astonished me that I was involuntarily retiring, without considering how odd an appearance my retreat would have; when Madame Duval called me back, and laughed very heartily at my ignorance of foreign customs.

The conversation, however, very soon took a more serious turn; for she began, with great bitterness, to inveigh against the *barbarous brutality of that fellow the Captain*, and the horrible illbreeding of the English in general, declaring she should make her escape with all expedition from so *beastly a nation*: but nothing

can be more strangely absurd, than to hear politeness recommended in language so repugnant to it as that of Madame Duval.

She lamented very mournfully the fate of her Lyons silk, and protested she had rather have parted with all the rest of her wardrobe, because it was the first gown she had bought to wear upon leaving off her weeds: she has a very bad cold, and Monsieur Du Bois is so hoarse he can hardly speak.

She insisted upon my staying with her all day; as she intended, she said, to introduce me to some of my own relations. I would very fain have excused myself, but she did not allow me any choice.

Till the arrival of these relations, one continued series of questions on her side and of answers on mine filled up all the time we passed together. Her curiosity was insatiable; she inquired into every action of my life, and every particular that had fallen under my observation in the lives of all I knew. Again, she was so cruel as to avow the most inveterate rancor against the sole benefactor her deserted child and grandchild have met with; and such was the indignation her ingratitude raised, that I would actually have quitted her presence and house, had she not, in a manner the most peremptory, absolutely forbid me. But what,

good Heaven! can induce her to such shocking injustice? Oh, my friend and father! I have no command of myself when this subject is started.

She talked very much of taking me to Paris, and said I greatly wanted the polish of a French education. She lamented that I had been brought up in the country, which, she observed, had given me a very *bumpkinish air;* however, she bid me not despair, for she had known many girls, much worse than me, who had become very fine ladies after a few years residence abroad; and she particularly instanced a Miss Polly Moore, daughter of a chandler's-shop woman, who, by an accident not worth relating, happened to be sent to Paris, where, from an awkward illbred girl, she so much improved, that she has since been taken for a woman of quality.

The relations to whom she was pleased to introduce me consisted of a Mr. Branghton, who is her nephew, and three of his children; the eldest of which is a son, and the two younger are daughters.

Mr. Branghton appears about forty years of age: he does not seem to want a common understanding, though he is very contracted and prejudised: he has spent his whole time in the city, and I believe feels a great contempt for all who reside elsewhere.

His son seems weaker in his understanding, and more gay in his temper; but his gaiety is that of a foolish overgrown schoolboy, whose mirth consists in noise and disturbance: he disdains his father, for his close attention to business and love of money; though he seems himself to have no talents, spirit, or generosity, to make him superior to either: his chief delight appears to be tormenting and ridiculing his sisters, who in return most heartily despise him.

Miss Branghton, the eldest daughter, is by no means ugly, but looks proud, illtempered, and conceited:—she hates the city, though without knowing why; for it is easy to discover she has lived nowhere else.

Miss Polly Branghton is rather pretty, very foolish, very ignorant, very giddy, and I believe very goodnatured.

The first half hour was allotted to *making themselves comfortable*; for they complained of having had a very dirty walk, as they came on foot from Snow-Hill, where Mr. Branghton keeps a silversmith's shop; and the young ladies had not only their coats to brush and shoes to dry, but to adjust their head-dress, which their bonnets had totally discomposed.

The manner in which Madame Duval was pleased to introduce me to this family extremely

shocked me. "Here, my dears!" said she, "here's a relation you little thought of: but you must know my poor daughter Caroline had this child after she ran away from me,—though I never knew nothing of it, not I! for a long while after; for they took care to keep it a secret from me, though the poor child has never a friend in the world besides."

"Miss seems very tender-hearted, aunt," said Miss Polly, "and to be sure she's not to blame for her mamma's undutifulness, for she cou'dn't help it."

"Lord, no!" answered she, "and I never took no notice of it to her; for indeed, as to that, my own poor daughter wasn't so much to blame as you may think; for she'd never have gone astray, if it had not been for that meddling old parson I told you of."

"If aunt pleases," said young Mr. Branghton, "we'll talk o' somewhat else; for Miss looks very uneasy-like."

The next subject that was chosen, was the age of the three young Branghtons and myself. The son is twenty; the daughters, upon hearing that I was seventeen, said that was just the age of Miss Polly; but their brother, after a long dispute, proved that she was two years older; to the great anger of both sisters, who agreed that he was very illnatured and spiteful.

When this point was settled, the question was put, Which was tallest?—We were desired to measure, as the Branghtons were all of different opinions:—none of them, however, disputed my being the tallest in the company, but, in regard to one another, they were extremely quarrelsome: the brother insisted upon their measuring *fair*, and not with *heads* and *heels*; but they would by no means consent to lose those privileges of our sex, and therefore the young man was *cast* as shortest; though he appealed to all present upon the injustice of the decree.

This ceremony over, the young ladies began very freely to examine my dress, and to interrogate me concerning it. "This apron's your own work, I suppose, Miss! but these sprigs a'nt in fashion now. Pray, if it is not impertinent, what might you give a yard for this lutestring?—Do you make your own caps, Miss?"—and many other questions equally interesting and well-bred.

They then asked me *how I liked London?* and whether I should not think the country a very *dull place* when I returned thither?—"Miss must try if she can't get a good husband," said Mr. Branghton, "and then she may stay and live here."

The next topic was public places, or rather

the theatres, for they knew of no other; and the merits and defects of all the actors and actresses were discussed: the young man here took the lead, and seemed to be very conversant on the subject. But, during this time, what was my concern, and, suffer me to add, my indignation, when I found, by some words I occasionally heard, that Madame Duval was entertaining Mr. Branghton with all the most secret and cruel particulars of my situation! The eldest daughter was soon drawn to them by the recital; the youngest and the son still kept their places, intending, I believe, to divert me, though the conversation was all their own.

In a few minutes, Miss Branghton, coming suddenly up to her sister, exclaimed, "Lord, Polly, only think! Miss never saw her papa!"

"Lord, how odd!" cried the other; "why then, Miss, I suppose you wou'dn't know him?"

This was quite too much for me;—I rose hastily, and ran out of the room: but I soon regretted I had so little command of myself, for the two sisters both followed, and insisted upon comforting me, notwithstanding my earnest intreaties to be left alone.

As soon as I returned to the company, Madame Duval said, "Why, my dear, what was the matter with you? why did you run away so?"

This question almost made me run again,

for I knew not how to answer it: but is it not very extraordinary that she can put me in situations so shocking, and then wonder to find me sensible of any concern?

Mr. Branghton junior now inquired of me, whether I had seen the Tower, or St. Paul's church? and upon my answering in the negative, they proposed making a party to shew them to me. Among other questions, they also asked if I had ever seen *such a thing as an Opera?* I told them I had. "Well," said Mr. Branghton, "I never saw one in my life, so long as I've lived in London; and I never desire to see one, if I live here as much longer."

"Lord, Papa!" cried Miss Polly, "why not? you might as well for once, for the curiosity of the thing: besides, Miss Pomfret saw one, and she says it was very pretty."

"Miss will think us very vulgar," said Miss Branghton, "to live in London, and never have been to an Opera; but it's no fault of mine, I assure you, Miss! only Papa don't like to go."

The result was that a party was proposed and agreed to, for some early opportunity. I did not dare contradict them; but I said that my time, while I remained in town, was at the disposal of Mrs. Mirvan: however, I am sure I will not attend them, if I can possibly avoid so doing.

When we parted, Madame Duval desired to see me the next day; and the Branghtons told me, that the first time I went towards Snow-Hill, they should be very glad if I would call upon them.

I wish we may not meet again till that time arrives.

I am sure I shall not be very ambitious of being known to any more of my relations, if they have any resemblance to those whose acquaintance I have been introduced to already.

LETTER XVIII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

I HAD just finished my letter to you this morning, when a violent rapping at the door made me run down stairs; and who should I see in the drawing-room, but—Lord Orville!

He was quite alone, for the family had not assembled to breakfast. He inquired first of mine, then of the health of Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, with a degree of concern that rather surprised me, till he said that he had just been informed of the accident we had met with at Ranelagh. He expressed his sorrow upon the occasion with the utmost politeness, and lamented that he had not been so fortunate as to hear of it in time to offer his services. "But I think," he added, "Sir Clement Willoughby had the honor of assisting you?"

"He was with Captain Mirvan, my Lord."

"I had heard of his being of your party."

I hope that flighty man has not been telling Lord Orville he only assisted *me!* however, he

did not pursue the subject, but said,—"This accident, though extremely unfortunate, will not, I hope, be the means of frightening you from gracing Ranelagh with your presence in future?"

"Our time, my Lord, for London, is almost expired already."

"Indeed! do you leave town so very soon?"

"O yes, my Lord! our stay has already exceeded our intentions."

"Are you, then, so particularly partial to the country?"

"We merely came to town, my Lord, to meet Captain Mirvan."

"And does Miss Anville feel no concern at the idea of the many mourners her absence will occasion?"

"Oh, my Lord,—I'm sure you don't think—" I stopped there; for, indeed, I hardly knew what I was going to say. My foolish embarrassment I suppose, was the cause of what followed;—for he came to me, and took my hand, saying, "I *do* think, that whoever has once seen Miss Anville, must receive an impression never to be forgotten."

This compliment,—from Lord Orville,—so surprised me that I could not speak; but felt myself change color, and stood for some moments silent and looking down: however, the

the instant I recollected my situation, I withdrew my hand, and told him that I would see if Mrs. Mirvan was not dressed. He did not oppose me, so away I went.

I met them all on the stairs, and returned with them to breakfast.

I have since been extremely angry with myself for neglecting so excellent an opportunity of apologising for my behaviour at the ridotto: but, to own the truth, that affair never once occurred to me during the short *tête-à-tête* which we had together. But, if ever we should happen to be so situated again, I will certainly mention it; for I am inexpressibly concerned at the thought of his harbouring an opinion that I am bold or impertinent, and I could almost kill myself for having given him the shadow of a reason for so shocking an idea.

But was it not very odd that he should make me such a compliment? I expected it not from him;—but gallantry, I believe, is common to all men, whatever other qualites they may have in particular.

Our breakfast was the most agreeable meal, if it may be called a *meal*, that we have had since we came to town. Indeed, but for Madame Duval, I should like London extremely.

The conversation of Lord Orville is really delightful. His manners are so elegant, so gentle, so unassuming, that they at once en-

gage esteem and diffuse complacence. Far from being indolently satisfied with his own accomplishments, as I have already observed many men here are, though without any pretensions to his merit, he is most assiduously attentive to please and to serve all who are in his company; and, though his success is invariable, he never manifests the smallest degree of consciousness.

I could wish that *you*, my dearest Sir, knew Lord Orville, because I am sure you would love him; and I have felt that wish for no other person I have seen since I came to London. I sometimes imagine, that, when his youth is flown, his vivacity abated, and his life is devoted to retirement, he will, perhaps, resemble him whom I most love and honor. His present sweetness, politeness, and diffidence, seem to promise in future the same benevolence, dignity, and goodness. But I must not expatiate upon this subject.

When Lord Orville was gone—and he made but a very short visit,—I was preparing, most reluctantly, to wait upon Madame Duval; but Mrs. Mirvan proposed to the Captain, that she should be invited to dinner in Queen-Ann-street, and he readily consented, for he said he wished to ask after her Lyons negligee.

The invitation is accepted, and we expect her every moment. But to me, it is very strange,

that a woman, who is the uncontrolled mistress of her time, fortune, and actions, should choose to expose herself voluntarily to the rudeness of a man who is openly determined to make her his sport. But she has very few acquaintance, and, I fancy, scarce knows how to employ herself.

How great is my obligation to Mrs. Mirvan, for bestowing her time in a manner so disagreeable to herself merely to promote my happiness! every dispute in which her undeserving husband engages is productive of pain and uneasiness to herself; of this I am so sensible, that I even besought her not to send to Madame Duval; but she declared she could not bear to have me pass all my time, while in town, with her only. Indeed, she could not be more kind to me, were she your daughter.

LETTER XIX.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Saturday Morning, April 16.

Madame Duval was accompanied by Monsieur Du Bois. I am surprised that she should choose to introduce him where he is so unwelcome; and, indeed, it is strange that they should be so constantly together: though I believe I should not have taken notice of it, but that Captain Mirvan is perpetually rallying me upon my *grandmamma's beau*.

They were both received by Mrs. Mirvan with her usual good-breeding; but the Captain, most provokingly, attacked her immediately, saying, "Now, Madam, you that have lived abroad, please to tell me this here; which did you like best, the *warm room* at Ranelagh, or the *cold bath* you went into afterwards? — though, I assure you, you look so well, that I should advise you to take another dip."

"*Ma foi*, Sir," cried she, "nobody asked for your advice, so you may as well keep it to

yourself: besides, it's no such great joke, to be splashed, and to catch could, and spoil all one's things, whatever you may think of it."

"*Splashed*, quoth-a!—why I thought you were soused all over.—Come, come, don't mince the matter, never spoil a good story; you know you hadn't a dry thread about you.—'Fore George, I shall never think on't without hallowing! such a poor, forlorn, draggle-tailed, *gentlewoman*! and poor *Monseer* French, here, like a drowned rat, by your side!—"

"Well, the worse pickle we was in, so much the worser in you not to help us, for you knowed where we were fast enough; because, while I laid in the mud, I'm pretty sure I heard you snigger; so it's like enough you jostled us down yourself; for Monsieur Du Bois says, that he is sure he had a great jolt given him, or he shouldn't have fell."

The Captain laughed so immoderately, that he really gave me also a suspicion that he was not entirely innocent of the charge: however, he disclaimed it very peremptorily. "Why then," continued she, "if you didn't do that, why didn't you come to help us?"

"Who, I?—what do you suppose I had forgot I was an *Englishman*,—a filthy, beastly *Englishman*?"

"Very well, Sir! very well; but I was a

fool to expect any better, for it's all of a piece with the rest: you know you wanted to fling me out of the coach-window, the very first time ever I see you; but I'll never go to Ranelagh with you no more, that I'm resolved; for I dare say, if the horses had runn'd over me as I laid in that nastiness, you'd never have stirred a step to save me."

"Lord, no, to be sure, Ma'am, not for the world! I know your opinion of our nation too well, to affront you by supposing a *Frenchman* would want *my* assistance to protect you. Did you think that *Monseer* here, and I, had changed characters, and that he should pop you into the mud, and I help you out of it? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, very well, Sir! laugh on, it's like your manners; however, if poor Monsieur Du Bois hadn't met with that unlucky accident himself, I shouldn't have wanted nobody's help."

"Oh, I promise you, Madam, you'd never have had mine; I knew my distance better; and as to your being a little ducked, or so, why, to be sure, *Monseer* and you settled that between yourselves; so it was no business of mine."

"What! then, I suppose, you want to make me believe as Monsieur Du Bois served me that trick o' purpose?"

"O' purpose! aye, certainly, who ever doubted that? Do you think a *Frenchman* ever made a blunder? If he had been some clumsy-footed *English* fellow, indeed, it might have been accidental: but what the devil signifies all your hopping and capering with your dancing-masters, if you can't balance yourselves upright?"

In the midst of this dialogue, Sir Clement Willoughby made his appearance. He affects to enter the house with the freedom of an old acquaintance; and this very *easiness*, which, to me, is astonishing, is what most particularly recommends him to the Captain: indeed, he seems very successfully to study all the humors of that gentleman.

After having heartily welcomed him, "You are just come in time, my boy," said he, "to settle a little matter of a dispute between this here gentlewoman and I; do you know, she has been trying to persuade me, that she did not above half like the ducking *Monseer* gave her t'other night."

"I should have hoped," said Sir Clement, with the utmost gravity "that the friendship subsisting between that lady and gentleman, would have guarded them against any actions professedly disagreeable to each other; but, probably, they might not have discussed the matter previously; in which case, the gentleman, I must

own, seems to have been guilty of imitation, since, in my humble opinion, it was his business first to have inquired whether the lady preferred soft or hard ground, before he dropped her."

"Oh, very fine, Gentlemen, very fine!" cried Madame Duval; "you may try to set us together by the ears as much as you will; but I'm not such an ignorant person as to be made a fool of so easily; so you needn't talk no more about it, for I sees into your designs."

Monsieur Du Bois, who was just able to discover the subject upon which the conversation turned, made his defence in French with great solemnity: he hoped, he said, that the company would at least acknowledge he did not come from a nation of brutes, and consequently, that to wilfully offend any lady was to him utterly impossible; but that, on the contrary, in endeavouring, as was his duty, to save and guard her, he had himself suffered, in a manner which he would forbear to relate, but which he greatly apprehended he should feel the ill effects of for many months; and then, with a countenance exceedingly lengthened, he added, that he hoped it would not be attributed to him as a national prejudice, when he owned that he must, to the best of his memory, aver, that his unfortunate fall was owing to a sudden but violent push

which, he was shocked to say, some malevolent person, with a design to his injury, must certainly have given him; but whether with a view to mortify him, by making him let the lady fall, or whether merely to spoil his clothes, he could not pretend to determine.

This disputation was at last, concluded by Mrs. Mirvan's proposing that we should all go to Cox's Museum. Nobody objected, and carriages were immediately ordered.

In our way down stairs, Madame Duval, in a very passionate manner said, "*Ma foi!* if I wouldn't give fifty guineas, only to know who gave us that shove!"

This museum is very astonishing and very superb; yet it afforded me but little pleasure, for it is a mere show, though a wonderful one.

Sir Clement Willoughby, in our walk round the room, asked me what my opinion was of this brilliant *spectacle?*

"It is very fine, and very ingenious," answered I, "and yet—I don't know how it is,—but I seem to *miss something.*"

"Excellently answered!" cried he, "you have exactly defined my own feelings, though in a manner I should never have arrived at. But I was certain your taste was too well formed, to be pleased at the expense of your understanding."

"*Pardi*," cried Madame Duval, "I hope you two is difficult enough! I'm sure if you don't like this, you like nothing; for it's the grandest, prettiest, finest sight that ever I see in England."

"What!" cried the Captain with a sneer, "I suppose this may be in your French taste? it's like enough, for it's all *kickshaw* work. But, pr'ythee, friend!" turning to the person who explained the devices, "will you tell me the *use* of all this? for I'm not enough of a conjurer to find it out."

"Use, indeed!" repeated Madame Duval disdainfully, "Lord, if every thing's to be useful!—"

"Why, Sir, as to that, Sir," said our conductor, "the ingenuity of the mechanism,—the beauty of the workmanship,—the—undoubtedly, Sir, any person of taste may easily discern the utility of such extraordinary performances."

"Why then, Sir," answered the Captain, "your person of taste must be either a coxcomb, or a Frenchman; though, for the matter of that, 'tis the same thing."

Just then, our attention was attracted by a pine-apple, which, suddenly opening, discovered a nest of birds., who immediately began to sing. "Well," cried Madame Duval, "this is prettier than all the rest! I declare, in all my travels, I never see nothing eleganter."

"Hark ye, friend!" said the Captain, "hast never another pine-apple?"

"Sir?—"

"Because, if thou hast, pr'ythee give it us without the birds; for, d'ye see, I'm no Frenchman, and should relish something more substantial."

This entertainment concluded with a concert of mechanical music: I cannot explain how it was produced, but the effect was pleasing. Madame Duval was in ecstasies; and the Captain flung himself into so many ridiculous distortions, by way of mimicking her, that he engaged the attention of all the company; and, in the midst of the performance of the Coronation Anthem, while Madame Duval was affecting to beat time, and uttering many expressions of delight, he called suddenly for salts, which a lady, apprehending some distress, politely handed to him, and which, instantly applying to the nostrils of poor Madame Duval, she involuntarily snuffed up such a quantity, that the pain and surprise made her scream aloud. When she recovered, she reproached him with her usual vehemence; but he protested he had taken that measure out of pure friendship, as he concluded, from her raptures, that she was going into hysterics. This excuse by no means appeased her, and they had a violent quarrel; but the only effect her anger had

on the Captain was to increase his diversion. Indeed, he laughs and talks so terribly loud in public, that he frequently makes us ashamed of belonging to him.

Madame Duval, notwithstanding her wrath, made no scruple of returning to dine in Queen-Ann-street. Mrs. Mirvan had secured places for the play at Drury-Lane Theatre, and, though ever uneasy in her company, she very politely invited Madame Duval to be of our party; however, she had a bad cold, and chose to nurse it. I was sorry for her indisposition, but I knew not how to be sorry she did not accompany us, for she is — I must not say what, but very unlike other people.

LETTER XX.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

OUR places were in the front row of a side-box. Sir Clement Willoughby, who knew our intention, was at the door of the theatre, and handed us from the carriage.

We had not been seated five minutes, before Lord Orville, who we saw in the stage box, came to us; and he honored us with his company all the evening. Miss Mirvan and I both rejoiced that Madame Duval was absent, as we hoped for the enjoyment of some conversation, uninterrupted by her quarrels with the Captain: but I soon found that her presence would have made very little alteration; for so far was I from daring to speak, that I knew not where even to look.

The play was Love for Love; and, though it is fraught with wit and entertainment, I hope I shall never see it represented again; for it is so extremely indelicate,,—to use the softest word I can,—that Miss Mirvan and I were perpetually

out of countenance, and could neither make any observations ourselves, nor venture to listen to those of others. This was the more provoking, as Lord Orville was in excellent spirits, and exceedingly entertaining.

When the play was over, I flattered myself I should be able to look about me with less restraint, as we intended to stay the Farce; but the curtain had hardly dropped, when the box-door opened, and in came Mr. Lovel, the man by whose foppery and impertinence I was so much teized at the ball where I first saw Lord Orville.

I turned away my head, and began talking to Miss Mirvan, for I was desirous to avoid speaking to him;—but in vain, for as soon as he had made his compliments to Lord Orville and Sir Clement Willoughby, who returned them very coldly, he bent his head forward, and said to me, "I hope, Ma'am, you have enjoyed your health since I had the honor—I beg ten thousand pardons, but I protest I was going to say the honor of *dancing* with you—however, I mean the honor of seeing you dance?"

He spoke with a self-complacency that convinced me he had studied this address, by way of making reprisals for my conduct at the ball: I therefore bowed slightly, but made no answer.

After a short silence, he again called my attention, by saying, in an easy, negligent way,

"I think, Ma'am, you was never in town before?"

"No, Sir."

"So I did presume. Doubtless, Ma'am, every thing must be infinitely novel to you. Our customs, our manners, and *les étiquettes de nous autres,* can have very little resemblance to those you have been used to. I imagine, Ma'am, your retirement is at no very small distance from the capital?"

I was so much disconcerted at this sneering speech, that I said not a word; though I have since thought my vexation both stimulated and delighted him.

"The air we breathe here, however, Ma'am" continued he, very conceitedly, "though foreign to that you have been accustomed to, has not, I hope, been at variance with your health?"

"Mr. Lovel," said Lord Orville, "could not your *eye* have spared that question?"

"Oh, my Lord!" answered he, "if *health* were the only cause of a lady's bloom, my eye, I grant, had been infallible from the first glance; but—"

"Come, come," cried Mrs. Mirvan, "I must beg no insinuations of that sort; Miss Anville's color, as you have successfully tried, may, you see, be heightened;—but I assure you, it would be past your skill to lessen it."

"'Pon honor, Madam," returned he, "you wrong me; I presumed not to infer that *rouge* was the only succedaneum for health; but, really, I have known so many different causes for a lady's color, such as flushing,—anger,—*mauvaise honte*,—and so forth, that I never dare decide to which it may be owing."

"As to such causes as them there," cried the Captain, "they must belong to those that they keep company with."

"Very true, Captain," said Sir Clement; "the natural complexion has nothing to do with occasional sallies of the passions, or any accidental causes."

"No, truly," returned the Captain, "for now here's me, why I look like any other man just now; and yet, if you were to put me in a passion, 'fore George, you'd soon see me have as fine a high color as any painted Jezabel in all this place, be she never so bedaubed."

"But," said Lord Orville, "the difference of natural and of artificial color seems to me very easily discerned; that of nature is mottled, and varying; that of art, *set*, and *too* smooth; it wants that animation, that glow, that *indescribable something*, which, even now that I see it, wholly surpasses all my powers of expression."

"Your Lordship," said Sir Clement, "is

universally acknowledged to be a *connoisseur* in beauty."

"And you, Sir Clement," returned he, "an *enthusiast*."

"I am proud to own it," cried Sir Clement; "in such a cause, and before such objects, enthusiasm is simply the consequence of not being blind."

"Pr'ythee a truce with all this palavering," cried the Captain, "the woman are vain enough already; no need for to puff 'em up more."

"We must all submit to the commanding officer," said Sir Clement; "therefore let us call another subject. Pray, Ladies, how have you been entertained with the play?"

"Want of entertainment," said Mrs. Mirvan, "is its least fault; but I own there are objections to it, which I should be glad to see removed."

"I could have ventured to answer for the Ladies," said Lord Orville, "since I am sure this is not a play that can be honored with their approbation."

"What, I suppose it is not sentimental enough!" cried the Captain, "or else it's too good for them; for I'll maintain it's one of the best comedies in the language, and has more wit in one scene, than there is in all the new plays put together."

"For my part," said Mr. Lovel, "I confess

I seldom listen to the players: one has so much to do, in looking about, and finding out one's acquaintance, that, really, one has no time to mind the stage. Pray,"—most affectedly fixing his eyes upon a diamond-ring on his little finger, "pray—what was the play to-night?"

"Why, what the devil!" cried the Captain, "do you come to the play without knowing what it is?"

"O yes, Sir, yes, very frequently! I have no time to read playbills; one merely comes to meet one's friends, and show that one's alive.".

"Ha, ha, ha!—and so," cried the Captain, "it costs you five shillings a night, just to show that you're alive! Well, faith, my friends should all think me dead and under ground, before I'd be at that expense for 'em. Howsomever, this here you may take from me;—they'll find you out fast enough, if you've any thing to give 'em.—And so you've been here all this time, and don't know what the play was?"

"Why, really, Sir, a play requires so much attention,—it is scarce possible to keep awake, if one listens; for, indeed, by the time it is evening, one has been so fatigued, with dining, —or wine,—or the house,—or studying,—that it is—it is perfectly an impossibility. But, now I think of it, I believe I have a bill in my

pocket; O aye, here it is—Love for Love, aye, —true,—ha, ha,—how could I be so stupid!"

"Oh, easily enough, as to that, I warrant you," said the Captain; "but, by my soul, this is one of the best jokes I ever heard! Come to a play, and not know what it is! —Why, I suppose you wouldn't have found it out, if they had *fobb'd* you off with a scraping of fidlers, or an opera?—Ha! ha! ha!—why now, I should have thought you might have taken some notice of one Mr. *Tattle* that is in this play!"

This sarcasm, which caused a general smile, made him color: but turning to the Captain with a look of conceit, which implied that he had a retort ready, he said, "Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask,—what do *you* think of *one Mr. Ben,* who is also in this play?"

The Captain, regarding him with the utmost contempt, answered in a loud voice, "Think of him!—why I think he's a *man!*" And then, staring full in his face, he struck his cane on the ground, with a violence that made him start. He did not, however, choose to take any notice of this; but, having bit his nails some time, in manifest confusion, he turned very quick to me, and, in a sneering tone of voice, said, "For my part, I was most struck with the *country* young lady, Miss Prue; pray what do *you* think of her, Ma'am?"

"Indeed, Sir," cried I, very much provoked, "I think—that is, I do not think any thing about her."

"Well, really, Ma'am, you prodigiously surprise me!—*mais apparemment ce n'est qu'une façon de parler?*—though I should beg your pardon, for probably you do not understand French?"

I made no answer, for I thought his rudeness intolerable; but Sir Clement, with great warmth, said, "I am surprised that you can suppose such an object as Miss Prue would engage the attention of Miss Anville even for a moment."

"Oh, Sir," returned this fop, "'tis the first character in the piece!—so well drawn,—so much the thing!—such true country breeding,—such rural ignorance!—ha! ha! ha!—'tis most admirably hit off, 'pon honor!"

I could almost have cried, that such impertinence should be levelled at me; and yet, chagrined as I was, I could never behold Lord Orville and this man at the same time, and feel any regret for the cause I had given of displeasure.

"The only female in the play," said Lord Orville, "worthy of being mentioned to these ladies, is Angelica."

"Angelica," cried Sir Clement, "is a noble

girl; she tries her lover severely, but she rewards him generously."

"Yet, in a trial so long," said Mrs. Mirvan "there seems rather too much consciousness of her power."

"Since my opinion has the sanction of Mrs. Mirvan's," added Lord Orville, "I will venture to say, that Angelica bestows her hand rather with the air of a benefactress, than with the tenderness of a mistress. Generosity without delicacy, like wit without judgment, generally gives as much pain as pleasure. The uncertainty in which she keeps Valentine, and her manner of trifling with his temper, give no very favorable idea of her own."

"Well, my Lord," said Mr. Lovel, "it must, however, be owned, that uncertainty is not the *ton* among our ladies at present; nay, indeed, I think they say, though, faith!" taking a pinch of snuff, "I hope it is not true—but they say, that *we* now are most shy and backward."

The curtain then drew up, and our conversation ceased. Mr. Lovel, finding we chose to attend to the players, left the box. How strange it is, Sir, that this man, not contented with the large share of foppery and nonsense which he has from nature, should think proper to affect yet more! for what he said of Tattle and of Miss Prue, convinced me that he really

had listened to the play, though he was so ridiculous and foolish as to pretend ignorance.

But how malicious and impertinent in this creature to talk to me in such a manner! I am sure I hope I shall never see him again. I should have despised him heartily as a fop, had he never spoken to me at all; but now, that he thinks proper to resent his supposed ill-usage, I am really quite afraid of him.

The entertainment was, The Deuce is in Him; which Lord Orville observed to be the most finished and elegant *petite pièce* that was ever written in English.

In our way home, Mrs. Mirvan put me into some consternation, by saying it was evident, from the resentment which this Mr. Lovel harbours of my conduct, that he would think it a provocation sufficiently important for a duel, if his courage equalled his wrath.

I am terrified at the very idea. Good Heaven! that a man so weak and frivolous should be so revengeful! However, if bravery would have excited him to affront Lord Orville, how much reason have I to rejoice, that cowardice makes him contented with venting his spleen upon me! but we shall leave town soon, and, I hope, see him no more.

It was some consolation to me, to hear, from Miss Mirvan, that, while he was speaking

to me so cavalierly, Lord Orville regarded him with great indignation.

But, really, I think there ought to be a book of the laws and customs *à-la-mode* presented to all young people upon their first introduction into public company.

To-night we go to the opera, where I expect very great pleasure. We shall have the same party as at the play; for Lord Orville said he should be there, and would look for us.

LETTER XXI.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

I HAVE a volume to write of the adventures of yesterday.

In the afternoon,—at Berry Hill, I should have said the *evening*, for it was almost six o'clock,—while Miss Mirvan and I were dressing for the opera, and in high spirits, from the expectation of great entertainment and pleasure, we heard a carriage stop at the door, and concluded that Sir Clement Willoughby, with his usual assiduity, was come to attend us to the Haymarket; but, in a few moments, what was our surprise, to see our chamber-door flung open, and the two Miss Branghtons enter the room! They advanced to me with great familiarity, saying, "How do you do, cousin? —so we've caught you at the glass!—well, I'm determined I'll tell my brother of that!"

Miss Mirvan, who had never before seen them, and could not at first imagine who they

were, looked so much astonished, that I was ready to laugh myself, till the eldest said, "We're come to take you to the opera, Miss; papa and my brother are below; and we are to call for your grandmamma as we go along."

"I am very sorry," answered I, "that you should have taken so much trouble, as I am engaged already."

"Engaged! Lord, Miss, never mind that!" cried the youngest; "this young lady will make your excuses, I dare say; it's only doing as one would be done by, you know."

"Indeed, Ma'am," said Miss Mirvan, "I shall myself be very sorry to be deprived of Miss Anville's company this evening."

"Well, Miss, that is not so very goodnatured in you," said Miss Branghton, "considering we only come to give our cousin pleasure; it's no good to us; it's all upon her account; for we came I don't know how much round about to take her up."

"I am extremely obliged to you," said I, "and very sorry you have lost so much time; but I cannot possibly help it, for I engaged myself without knowing you would call."

"Lord! what signifies that?" said Miss Polly, "you're no old maid, and so you needn't be

so very formal: besides, I dare say those you are engaged to a'n't half so near related to you as we are."

"I must beg you not to press me any further, for I assure you it is not in my power to attend you."

"Why we came all out of the city on purpose: besides, your grandmamma expects you; —and pray, what are we to say to her?"

"Tell her, if you please, that I am much concerned,—but that I am pre-engaged."

"And who to?" demanded the abrupt Miss Branghton.

"To Mrs. Mirvan,—and a large party."

"And, pray, what are you all going to do, that it would be such a mighty matter for you to come along with us?"

"We are all going to—to the opera."

"Oh, dear! if that be all, why can't we go all together?"

I was extremely disconcerted at this forward and ignorant behaviour, and yet their rudeness very much lessened my concern at refusing them. Indeed, their dress was such as would have rendered their scheme of accompanying our party impracticable, even if I had desired it; and this, as they did not themselves find out, I was obliged, in terms the least mortifying I could think of, to tell them.

They were very much chagrined, and asked where I should sit?

"In the pit," answered I.

"In the pit!" repeated Miss Branghton, "well, really, I must own I should never have supposed that my gown was not good enough for the pit: but come, Polly, let's go; if Miss does not think us fine enough for her, why to be sure she may choose."

Surprised at this ignorance, I would have explained to them that the pit, at the opera, required the same dress as the boxes; but they were so much affronted, they would not hear me, and, in great displeasure, left the room; saying they would not have troubled me, only they thought I should not be so proud with my own relations, and that they had at least as good a right to my company as strangers.

I endeavoured to apologise, and would have sent a long message to Madame Duval; but they hastened away without listening to me; and I could not follow them down stairs, because I was not dressed. The last words I heard them say, were, "Well, her grandmamma will be in a fine passion, that's one good thing."

Though I was extremely mad at this visit yet I so heartily rejoiced at their going, that I would not suffer myself to think gravely about it.

Soon after Sir Clement actually came, and we all went down stairs. Mrs. Mirvan ordered tea; and we were engaged in a very lively conversation, when the servant announced Madame Duval, who instantly followed him into the room.

Her face was the color of scarlet, and her eyes sparkled with fury. She came up to me with a hasty step, saying, "So, Miss! you refuses to come to me, do you?—and pray who are you, to dare to disobey me?"

I was quite frightened;—I made no answer;—I even attempted to rise, and could not, but sat still, mute, and motionless.

Every body, but Miss Mirvan, seemed in the utmost astonishment; and the Captain, rising and approaching Madame Duval, with a voice of authority, said, "Why, how now, Mrs. Turkey-Cock! what's put you into this here fluster?"

"It's nothing to you," answered she, "so you may as well hold your tongue, for I sha'nt be called to no account by you, I assure you."

"There you're out, Madam Fury!" returned he, "for you must know I never suffer any body to be in a passion in my house but myself."

"But you *shall*," cried she, in a great rage, "for I'll be in as great a passion as ever I please,

without asking your leave; so don't give yourself no more airs about it. And as for you, Miss," again advancing to me, "I order you to follow me this moment, or else I'll make you repent it all your life." And, with these words, she flung out of the room.

I was in such extreme terror, at being addressed and threatened in a manner to which I am so wholly unused, that I almost thought I should have fainted.

"Don't be alarmed, my love!" cried Mrs. Mirvan, "but stay where you are; and I will follow Madame Duval, and try to bring her to reason."

Miss Mirvan took my hand, and most kindly endeavoured to raise my spirits: Sir Clement, too, approached me, with an air so interested in my distress, that I could not but feel myself obliged to him; and, taking my other hand, said, "For heaven's sake, my dear Madam! compose yourself; surely the violence of such a wretch ought merely to move your contempt; she can have no right, I imagine, to lay her commands upon you, and I only wish that you would allow *me* to speak to her."

"O no! not for the world!—indeed, I believe, —I am afraid—I had better follow her."

"Follow her? Good God, my dear Miss Anville! would you trust yourself with a mad woman?

for what else can you call a creature whose passions are so insolent? No, no; send her word at once to leave the house, and tell her you desire that she will never see you again."

"O Sir! you don't know who you talk of! —it would ill become me to send Madame Duval such a message."

"But *why*," cried he, looking very inquisitive, "*why* should you scruple to treat her as she deserves!"

I then found that his aim was to discover the nature of her connexion with me; but I felt so much ashamed of my near relationship to her, that I could not persuade myself to answer him, and only intreated that he would leave her to Mrs. Mirvan, who just then entered the room.

Before she could speak to me, the Captain called out, "Well, Goody! what have you done with Madam French? is she cooled a little? 'cause if she been't, I've just thought of a most excellent device to bring her to."

"My dear Evelina," said Mrs Mirvan, "I have been vainly endeavouring to appease her; I pleaded your engagement, and promised your future attendance: but I am sorry to say, my love, that I fear her rage will end in a total breach, which I think you had better avoid, if she is any further opposed."

"Then I will go to her, Madam," cried I; "and, indeed, it is now no matter, for I should not be able to recover my spirits sufficiently to enjoy much pleasure *any* where this evening."

Sir Clement began a very warm expostulation and intreaty that I would not go; but I begged him to desist, and told him, very honestly, that, if my compliance were not indispensably necessary, I should require no persuasion to stay. He then took my hand, to lead me down stairs; but the Captain desired him to be quiet, saying he would 'squire me himself; "because," he added, exultingly, rubbing his hands, "I have a wipe ready for the old lady, which may serve her to *chew* as she goes along."

We found her in the parlour. "Oh, you're come at last, Miss, are you?—fine airs you give yourself, indeed! *ma foi!* if you hadn't come, you might have staid, I assure you, and have been a beggar for your pains."

"Heyday, Madam!" cried the Captain, prancing forward, with a look of great glee, "what, a'n't you got out of that there passion yet? why then, I'll tell you what to do to cool yourself; call upon your old friend, *Monseer* Slippery, who was with you at Ranelagh, and give my service to him, and tell him, if he sets any store by your health, that I desire he'll give you such

another souse as he did before: he'll know what I mean, and I'll warrant you he'll do't for my sake."

"Let him, if he dares!" cried Madame Duval; "but I sha'n't stay to answer you no more; you are a vulgar fellow—and so, child, let us leave him to himself."

"Hark ye, Madam," cried the Captain, "you'd best not call names; because, d'ye see! if you do, I shall make bold to show you the door."

She changed color, and saying, "*Parbi*, I can show it myself," hurried out of the room, and I followed her into a hackney-coach; but before we drove off, the Captain, looking out of the parlor window, called out, "D'ye hear, Madam,—don't forget my message to *Monseer*."

You will believe our ride was not the most agreeable in the world; indeed, it would be difficult to say which was least pleased, Madame Duval or me, though the reasons of our discontent were so different: however, Madame Duval soon got the start of me; for we had hardly turned out of Queen-Ann-street, when a man, running full speed, stopped the coach. He came up to the window, and I saw he was the Captain's servant. He had a broad grin on his face, and panted for breath. Madame Duval demanded his business; "Madam," answered he, "my master desires his compliments to you, and

and—and—and he says he wishes it well over with you. He! he! he!—"

Madame Duval instantly darted forward, and gave him a violent blow on the face; "Take that back for your answer, sirrah!" cried she, "and learn to grin at your betters another time. Coachman, drive on!"

The servant was in a violent passion, and swore terribly; but we were soon out of hearing.

The rage of Madame Duval was greater than ever, and she inveighed against the Captain with such fury, that I was even apprehensive she would have returned to his house purposely to reproach him, which she repeatedly threatened to do; nor would she, I believe have hesitated a moment, but that, notwithstanding her violence, he has really made her afraid of him.

When we came to her lodgings, we found all the Branghtons in the passage, impatiently waiting for us, with the door open.

"Only see, here's Miss!" cried the brother.

"Well, I declare I thought as much!" said the younger sister.

"Why, Miss," said Mr. Branghton, "I think you might as well have come with your cousins at once; it's throwing money in the dirt, to pay two coaches for one fare."

"Lord, father!" cried the son, "make no

words about that; for I'll pay for the coach that Miss had."

"Oh, I know very well," answered Mr. Branghton, "that you're always more ready to spend than to earn."

I then interfered, and begged that I might myself be allowed to pay the fare, as the expense was incurred upon my account; they all said *no*, and proposed that the same coach should carry us on to the opera.

While this passed, the Miss Branghtons were examining my dress, which, indeed, was very improper for my company; and as I was extremely unwilling to be so conspicuous amongst them, I requested Madame Duval to borrow a hat or bonnet for me of the people of the house. But she never wears either herself, and thinks them very *English* and barbarous; therefore she insisted that I should go full dressed, as I had prepared myself for the pit, though I made many objections.

We were then all crowded into the same carriage; but when we arrived at the opera-house, I contrived to pay the coachman. They made a great many speeches; but Mr. Branghton's reflection had determined me not to be indebted to him.

If I had not been too much chagrined to laugh, I should have been extremely diverted at

their ignorance of whatever belongs to an opera. In the first place, they could not tell at what door we ought to enter, and we wandered about for some time, without knowing which way to turn: they did not choose to apply to me,—though I was the only person of the party who had ever before been at an opera,—because they were unwilling to suppose that their *country cousin*, as they were pleased to call me, should be better acquainted with any London public place than themselves. I was very indifferent and careless upon this subject, but not a little uneasy at finding that my dress, so different from that of the company to which I belonged, attracted general notice and observation.

In a short time, however, we arrived at one of the door-keeper's *bars*. Mr. Branghton demanded for what part of the house they took money? They answered, the pit, and regarded us all with great earnestness. The son then advancing, said, "Sir, if you please, I beg that I may treat Miss."

"We'll settle that another time," answered Mr. Branghton, and put down a guinea.

Two tickets of admission were given to him.

Mr. Branghton, in his turn, now stared at the doorkeeper, and demanded what he meant by giving him only two tickets for a guinea.

"Only two, Sir?" said the man, "why don't

you know that the tickets are half a guinea each?"

"Half a guinea each!" repeated Mr. Branghton, "why I never heard of such a thing in my life! And pray, Sir, how many will they admit?"

"Just as usual, Sir, one person each."

"But one person for half a guinea!—why, I only want to sit in the pit, friend."

"Had not the Ladies better sit in the gallery, Sir, for they'll hardly choose to go into the pit with their hats on?"

"Oh, as to that," cried Miss Branghton, "if our hats are too high, we'll take them off when we get in. I sha'n't mind it, for I did my hair on purpose."

Another party then approaching, the door-keeper could no longer attend to Mr. Branghton, who, taking up the guinea, told him it should be long enough before he'd see it again, and walked away.

The young ladies, in some confusion, expressed their surprise that their *papa* should not know the opera prices, which, for their parts, they had read in the papers a thousand times.

"The price of stocks," said he, "is enough for me to see after; and I took it for granted it was the same thing here as at the play-house."

"I knew well enough what the price was," said the son, "but I would not speak, because I thought perhaps they'd take less, as we're such a large party."

The sisters both laughed very contemptuously at this idea, and asked him if he ever heard of *people's abating* anything at a public place?

"I don't know whether I have or no," answered he, "but I'm sure if they would, you'd like it so much the worse."

"Very true, Tom," cried Mr. Branghton; "tell a woman that any thing is reasonable, and she'll be sure to hate it."

"Well," said Miss Polly, "I hope that aunt and Miss will be of our side, for papa always takes part with Tom."

"Come, come!" cried Madame Duval, "if you stand talking here, we sha'n't get no place at all."

Mr. Branghton then inquired the way to the gallery, and, when we came to the doorkeeper, demanded what was to pay.

"The usual price, Sir," said the man.

"Then give me change," cried Mr. Branghton, again putting down his guinea.

"For how many, Sir?"

"Why—let's see,—for six."

"For six, Sir? why you've given me but a guinea.

"*But* a guinea! why how much would you have! I suppose it i'n't half a guinea a piece here too?"

"No, Sir, only five shillings."

Mr. Branghton again took up his unfortunate guinea, and protested he would submit to no such imposition. I then proposed that we should return home, but Madame Duval would not consent, and we were conducted, by a woman who sells books of the opera, to another gallery-door, where, after some disputing, Mr. Branghton at last paid, and we all went up stairs.

Madame Duval complained very much of the trouble of going so high, but Mr. Branghton desired her not to hold the place too cheap, "for, whatever you may think," cried he, "I assure you I paid pit price; so don't suppose I come here to save my money."

"Well, to be sure," said Miss Branghton, "there's no judging of a place by the outside, else, I must needs say, there's nothing very extraordinary in the staircase."

But, when we entered the gallery, their amazement and disappointment became general: for a few instants, they looked at one another without speaking, and then they all broke silence at once.

"Lord, papa!" exclaimed Miss Polly, "why you have brought us to the one-shilling gallery!"

"I'll be glad to give you two shillings, though," answered he, "to pay. I was never so fooled out of my money before, since the hour of my birth. Either the doorkeeper's a knave, or this is the greatest imposition that ever was put upon the public."

"*Ma foi!*" cried Madame Duval, "I never sat in such a mean place in all my life;—why it's as high!—we sha'nt see nothing."

"I thought at the time," said Mr. Branghton, "that five shillings was an exorbitant price for a place in the gallery, but as we'd been asked so much more at the other doors, why I paid it without many words; but then, to be sure, thinks I, it can never be like any other gallery—we shall see some *crinkum-crankum* or other for our money;—but I find it's as arrant a take-in as ever I met with."

"Why it's as like the twelvepenny gallery at Drury-lane," cried the son, "as two peas are to one another. I never knew father so bit before."

"Lord", said Miss Branghton, "I thought it would have been quite a fine place,—all over I don't know what,—and done quite in taste."

In this manner they continued to express their dissatisfaction till the curtain drew up; after which, their observations were very curious.

They made no allowance for the customs or even for the language of another country, but formed all their remarks upon comparisons with the English theatre.

Notwithstanding my vexation at having been forced into a party so very disagreeable, and that, too, from one so much—so very much the contrary; yet, would they have suffered me to listen, I should have forgotten every thing unpleasant, and felt nothing but delight in hearing the sweet voice of Signor Millico, the first singer; but they tormented me with continual talking.

"What a jabbering they make!" cried Mr. Braughton; "there's no knowing a word they say. Pray what's the reason they can't as well sing in English?—but I suppose the fine folks would not like it, if they could understand it."

"How unnatural their action is!" said the son: "why, now, who ever saw an Englishman put himself in such out-of-the-way postures?"

"For my part," said Miss Polly, "I think it's very pretty, only I don't know what it means."

"Lord, what does that signify?" cried her sister; "mayn't one like a thing without being so very particular?—You may see that Miss likes it, and I don't suppose she knows more of the matter than we do."

A gentleman, soon after, was so obliging as to make room in the front row for Miss Branghton and me. We had no sooner seated ourselves, than Miss Branghton exclaimed, "Good gracious! only see!—why, Polly, all the people in the pit are without hats, dressed like any thing!"

"Lord, so they are," cried Miss Polly, "well, I never saw the like!—it's worth coming to the opera if one saw nothing else."

I was then able to distinguish the happy party I had left; and I saw that Lord Orville had seated himself next to Mrs. Mirvan. Sir Clement had his eyes perpetually cast towards the five-shilling gallery, where I suppose he concluded that we were seated; however, before the opera was over, I have reason to believe that he had discovered me, high and distant as I was from him: probably he distinguished me by my headdress.

At the end of the first act, as the green curtain dropped to prepare for the dance, they imagined that the opera was done, and Mr. Branghton expressed great indignation that he had been *robbed* out of his money with so little trouble. "Now if any Englishman was to do such an impudent thing as this," said he, "why he'd be pelted;—but here, one of these outlandish gentry may do just what he pleases, and come on, and

squeak out a song or two, and then pocket your money without further ceremony."

However, so determined he was to be dissatisfied, that before the conclusion of the third act, he found still more fault with the opera for being too long, and wondered whether they thought their singing good enough to serve us for supper.

During the symphony of a song of Signor Millico's, in the second act, young Mr. Branghton said, "It's my belief that that fellow's going to sing another song!—Why, there's nothing but singing!—I wonder when they'll speak."

This song, which was slow and pathetic, caught all my attention, and I leaned my head forward to avoid hearing their observations, that I might listen without interruption; but, upon turning round, when the song was over, I found that I was the object of general diversion to the whole party; for the Miss Branghtons were tittering, and the two gentlemen making signs and faces at me, implying their contempt of my affectation.

This discovery determined me to appear as inattentive as themselves; but I was very much provoked at being thus prevented enjoying the only pleasure, which, in such a party, was within my power.

"So, Miss," said Mr. Branghton, "you're quite in the fashion, I see;—so you like operas? well, I'm not so polite; I can't like nonsense, let it be never so much the taste."

"But pray, Miss, said the son, what makes that fellow look so doleful while he's singing?"

"Probably because the character he performs is in distress."

"Why, then, I think he might as well let alone singing, till he's in better cue: it's out of all nature for a man to be piping when he's in distress. For my part, I never sing but when I'm merry; yet I love a song as well as most people."

When the curtain dropped, they all rejoiced.

"How do *you* like it?—and how do *you* like it?"—passed from one to another with looks of the utmost contempt. "As for me," said Mr. Branghton, "they've caught me once, but if ever they do again, I'll give'em leave to sing me to Bedlam for my pains: for such a heap of stuff never did I hear; there isn't one ounce of sense in the whole opera, nothing but one continued squeaking and squalling from beginning to end."

"If I had been in the pit," said Madame Duval, "I should have liked it vastly, for music is my passion; but sitting in such a place as this is quite unbearable."

Miss Branghton, looking at me, declared that she was not *genteel* enough to admire it.

Miss Polly confessed, that, if they would but sing *English* she should like it *very well.*

The brother wished he could raise a riot in the house, because then he might get his money again.

And finally, they all agreed, that it was *monstrous dear.*

During the last dance, I perceived, standing near the gallery-door, Sir Clement Willoughby. I was extremely vexed, and would have given the world to have avoided being seen by him: my chief objection was, from the apprehension that he would hear Miss Branghton call me *cousin.*—I fear you will think this London journey has made me grow very proud; but indeed this family is so low-bred and vulgar, that I should be equally ashamed of such a connexion in the country, or any where: and really I had already been so much chagrined that Sir Clement had been a witness of Madame Duval's power over me, that I could not bear to be exposed to any further mortification.

As the seats cleared, by parties going away, Sir Clement approached nearer to us; the Miss Branghtons observed with surprise, what a fine gentleman was come into the gallery, and they gave me great reason to expect, that they would

endeavour to attract his notice, by familiarity with me, whenever he should join us; and so I formed a sort of plan, to prevent any conversation. I am afraid you will think it wrong; and so I do myself now,—but, at the time, I only considered how I might avoid immediate humiliation.

As soon as he was within two seats of us, he spoke to me; "I am very happy, Miss Anville, to have found you, for the Ladies below have each an humble attendant, and therefore I am come to offer my services here."

"Why then," cried I, not without hesitating, "if you please,—I will join them."

"Will you allow me the honor of conducting you?" cried he eagerly; and, instantly taking my hand, he would have marched away with me: but I turned to Madame Duval, and said, "As our party is so large, Madam, if you will give me leave, I will go down to Mrs. Mirvan, that I may not crowd you in the coach."

And then, without waiting for an answer, I suffered Sir Clement to hand me out of the gallery.

Madame Duval, I doubt not, will be very angry, and so I am with myself, now, and therefore I cannot be surprised: but Mr. Braughton, I am sure, will easily comfort himself, in having escaped the additional coach expense

of carrying me to Queen-Ann-street: as to his daughters, they had no time to speak, but I saw they were in utter amazement.

My intention was to join Mrs. Mirvan, and accompany her home. Sir Clement was in high spirits and good humor; and, all the way we went, I was fool enough to rejoice in secret at the success of my plan; nor was it till I got down stairs, and amidst the servants, that any difficulty occurred to me of meeting with my friends.

I then asked Sir Clement how I should contrive to acquaint Mrs. Mirvan that I had left Madame Duval?

"I fear it will be almost impossible to find her," answered he; "but you can have no objection to permitting me to see you safe home."

He then desired his servant, who was waiting, to order his chariot to draw up.

This quite startled me; I turned to him hastily, and said that I could not think of going away without Mrs. Mirvan.

"But how can we meet with her?" cried he; "you will not choose to go into the pit yourself; I cannot send a servant there; and it is impossible for *me* to go and leave you alone."

The truth of this was indisputable, and totally silenced me. Yet, as soon as I could recollect myself, I determined not to go in his

chariot, and told him I believed I had best return to my party upstairs.

He would not hear of this; and earnestly intreated me not to withdraw the trust I had reposed in him.

While he was speaking, I saw Lord Orville, with several ladies and gentlemen, coming from the pit passage: unfortunately, he saw me too, and, leaving his company, advanced instantly towards me, and, with an air and voice of surprise, said, "Good God, do I see Miss Anville!"

I now most severely felt the folly of my plan and the awkwardness of my situation; however, I hastened to tell him, though in a hesitating manner, that I was waiting for Mrs. Mirvan: but what was my disappointment, when he acquainted me that she was already gone home!

I was inexpressibly distressed: to suffer Lord Orville to think me satisfied with the single protection of Sir Clement Willoughby, I could not bear; yet I was more than ever averse to returning to a party which I dreaded his seeing: I stood some moments in suspense, and could not help exclaiming, "Good heaven, what can I do!"

"Why, my dear Madam!" cried Sir Clement, "should you be thus uneasy?—you will reach Queen-Ann-street almost as soon as

Mrs. Mirvan, and I am sure you cannot doubt being as safe."

I made no answer, and Lord Orville then said, "My coach is here, and my servants are ready to take any commands Miss Anville will honor me with for them. I shall myself go home in a chair, and therefore—"

How grateful did I feel for a proposal so considerate, and made with so much delicacy! I should gladly have accepted it, had I been permitted: but Sir Clement would not let him even finish his speech; he interrupted him with evident displeasure, and said, "My Lord, my own chariot is now at the door."

And just then the servant came, and told him the carriage was ready. He begged to have the honor of conducting me to it, and would have taken my hand; but I drew it back, saying, "I can't—I can't indeed! pray go by yourself—and as to me, let me have a chair."

"Impossible!" cried he with vehemence; "I cannot think of trusting you with strange chairmen,—I cannot answer it to Mrs. Mirvan; —come, dear Madam! we shall be home in five minutes."

Again I stood suspended. With what joy would I then have compromised with my pride, to have been once more with Madame Duval and the Branghtons, provided I had not met

with Lord Orville! However, I flatter myself that he not only saw, but pitied my embarrassment, for he said, in a tone of voice unusually softened, "To offer my services in the presence of Sir Clement Willoughby would be superfluous; but I hope I need not assure Miss Anville, how happy it would make me to be of the least use to her."

I curtsied my thanks. Sir Clement, with great earnestness, pressed me to go; and while I was thus uneasily deliberating what to do, the dance, I suppose, finished, for the people crowded down stairs. Had Lord Orville then repeated his offer, I would have accepted it, notwithstanding Sir Clement's repugnance; but I fancy he thought it would be impertinent. In a very few minutes I heard Madame Duval's voice, as she descended from the gallery. "Well," cried I, hastily, "if I must go—" I stopped, but Sir Clement immediately handed me into his chariot, called out "Queen-Ann-street," and then jumped in himself. Lord Orville, with a bow and a half smile, wished me good night.

My concern was so great, at being seen and left by Lord Orville in so strange a situation, that I should have been best pleased to have remained wholly silent during our ride home: but Sir Clement took care to prevent that.

He began by making many complaints of my

unwillingness to trust myself with him, and begged to know what could be the reason? This question so much embarrassed me, that I could not tell what to answer, but only said, that I was sorry to have taken up so much of his time.

"Oh, Miss Anville!" cried he, taking my hand, "if you knew with what transport I would dedicate to you not only the present but all the future time allotted to me, you would not injure me by making such an apology."

I could not think of a word to say to this, nor to a great many other equally fine speeches with which he ran on, though I would fain have withdrawn my hand, and made almost continual attempts; but in vain, for he actually grasped it between both his, without any regard to my resistance.

Soon after, he said that he believed the coachman was going, the wrong way, and he called to his servant, and gave him directions. Then again addressing himself to me, "How often, how assiduously have I sought an opportunity of speaking to you, without the presence of that brute, Captain Mirvan! Fortune has now kindly favored me with one, and permit me" again seizing my hand, "permit me to use it, in telling you that I adore you."

I was quite thunderstruck at this abrupt and unexpected declaration. For some moments, I

was silent; but when I recovered from my surprise, I said, "Indeed, Sir, if you were determined to make me repent leaving my own party so foolishly, you have very well succeeded."

"My dearest life!" cried he, "is it possible you can be so cruel? Can your nature and your countenance be so totally opposite? Can the sweet bloom upon those charming cheeks, which appears as much the result of good humor as of beauty—"

"Oh, Sir!" cried I, interrupting him, "this is very fine; but I had hoped we had had enough of this sort of conversation at the ridotto, and I did not expect you would so soon resume it."

"What I then said, my sweet reproacher, was the effect of a mistaken, a profane idea, that your understanding held no competition with your beauty; but now,—now that I find you equally incomparable in both,—all words, all powers of speech, are too feeble to express the admiration I feel of your excellencies."

"Indeed," cried I, "if your thoughts had any connexion with your language, you would never suppose that I could give credit to praise so very much above my desert."

This speech, which I made very gravely, occasioned still stronger protestations, which he continued to pour forth, and I continued to,

disclaim, till I began to wonder that we were not in Queen-Ann-street, and begged he would desire the coachman to drive faster.

"And does this little moment," cried he, "which is the first of happiness I have ever known,—does it already appear so very long to you?"

"I am afraid the man has mistaken the way," answered I, "or else we should ere now have been at our journey's end: I must beg you will speak to him."

"And can you think me so much my own enemy?—if my good genius has inspired the man with a desire of prolonging my happiness, can you expect that I should counteract its indulgence!"

I now began to apprehend that he had himself ordered the man to go a wrong way: and I was so much alarmed at the idea, that, the very instant it occurred to me, I let down the glass, and made a sudden effort to open the chariot-door myself, with a view of jumping into the street; but he caught hold of me, exclaiming, "For heaven's sake! what is the matter?"

"I—I don't know," cried I, quite out of breath; "but I am sure the man goes wrong; and, if you will not speak to him, I am determined I will get out myself."

"You amaze me," answered he, still holding me: "I cannot imagine what you apprehend. Surely you can have no doubts of my honor!"

He drew me towards him as he spoke. I was frightened dreadfully, and could hardly say,—"No, Sir! no,—none at all: only Mrs. Mirvan,—I think she will be uneasy."

"Whence this alarm, my dearest angel?—What can you fear?—my life is at your devotion! and can you, then, doubt my protection?"

And so saying he passionately kissed my hand.

Never in my whole life have I been so terrified. I broke forcibly from him, and, putting my head out of the window, called aloud to the man to stop. Where we then were I know not; but I saw not a human being, or I should have called for help.

Sir Clement, with great earnestness, endeavoured to appease and compose me; "If you do not intend to murder me," cried I, "for mercy's—for pity's sake, let me get out!"

"Compose your spirits, my dearest life!" cried he, "and I will do every thing you would have me:" and then he called to the man himself, and bid him make haste to Queen-Ann-street. "This stupid fellow," continued he, "has certainly mistaken my orders; but I hope you are now fully satisfied."

I made no answer, but kept my head at the window, watching which way he drove, but without any comfort to myself, as I was quite unacquainted with either the right or the wrong.

Sir Clement now poured forth abundant protestations of honor and assurances of repect; intreating my pardon for having offended me, and beseeching my good opinion: but I was quite silent, having too much apprehension to make reproaches, and too much anger to speak without.

In this manner we went through several streets, till at last, to my great terror, he suddenly ordered the man to stop, and said, "Miss Anville, we are now within twenty yards of your house; but I cannot bear to part with you, till you generously forgive me for the offence you have taken, and promise not to make it known to the Mirvans."

I hesitated between fear and indignation.

"Your reluctance to speak redoubles my contrition for having displeased you, since it shows the reliance I might have on a promise which you will not give without consideration."

"I am very, very much distressed," cried I; "you ask a promise which you must be sensible I ought not to grant and yet dare not refuse."

"Drive on!" cried he to the coachman;—"Miss Anville I will not compel you; I will exact no promise, but trust wholly to your generosity."

This rather softened me; which advantage he no sooner perceived, than he determined to avail himself of; for he flung himself on his knees, and pleaded with so much submission, that I was really obliged to forgive him, because his humiliation made me quite ashamed: and after that, he would not let me rest till I gave him my word that I would not complain of him to Mrs. Mirvan.

My own folly and pride, which had put me in his power, were pleas which I could not but attend to in his favor: however, I shall take very particular care never to be again alone with him.

When, at last, we arrived at our house, I was so overjoyed, that I should certainly have pardoned him then, if I had not before. As he handed me up stairs, he scolded his servant aloud and very angrily, for having gone so much out of the way. Miss Mirvan ran out to meet me:—and who should I see behind her, but—Lord Orville!

All my joy now vanished, and gave place to shame and confusion; for I could not endure that he should know how long a time Sir Cle-

ment and I had been together, since I was not at liberty to assign any reason for it.

They all expressed great satisfaction at seeing me, and said they had been extremely uneasy and surprised that I was so long coming home, as they had heard from Lord Orville that I was not with Madame Duval. Sir Clement, in an affected passion, said that his booby of a servant had misunderstood his orders, and was driving us to the upper end of Piccadilly: for my part, I only colored; for though I would not forfeit my word, I yet disdained to confirm a tale in which I had myself no belief.

Lord Orville, with great politeness, congratulated me that the troubles of the evening had so happily ended, and said that he had found it impossible to return home before he inquired after my safety.

In a very short time he took leave, and Sir Clement followed him. As soon as they were gone, Mrs. Mirvan, though with great softness, blamed me for having quitted Madame Duval. I assured her, and with truth, that for the future I would be more prudent.

The adventures of the evening so much disconcerted me, that I could not sleep all night. I am under the most cruel apprehensions, lest Lord Orville should suppose my being on the gallery-stairs with Sir Clement was a concerted

scheme, and even that our continuing so long together in his chariot was with my approbation; since I did not say a word on the subject, nor express any dissatisfaction at the coachman's pretended blunder.

Yet his coming hither to wait our arrival, though it seems to imply some doubt, shows also some anxiety; indeed, Miss Mirvan says that he appeared *extremely* anxious—nay, uneasy and impatient—for my return; if I did not fear to flatter myself, I should think it not impossible but that he had a suspicion of Sir Clement's design, and was therefore concerned for my safety.

What a long letter is this! however, I shall not write many more from London, for the Captain said this morning that he would leave town on Tuesday next. Madame Duval will dine here to-day, and then she is to be told his intention.

I am very much amazed that she accepted Mrs. Mirvan's invitation, as she was in such wrath yesterday. I fear that to-day I shall myself be the principal object of her displeasure; but I must submit patiently, for I cannot defend myself.

Adieu, my dearest Sir!—Should this letter be productive of any uneasiness to you, more than ever shall I repent the heedless imprudence which it recites.

LETTER XXII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Monday Morning, April 18.

Mrs. Mirvan has just communicated to me an anecdote, concerning Lord Orville, which has much surprised,—half pleased, and half pained me.

While they were sitting together during the opera, he told her that he had been greatly concerned at the impertinence which the young lady under her protection had suffered from Mr. Lovel;—but that he had the pleasure of assuring her, she had no future disturbance to apprehend from him.

Mrs. Mirvan, with great eagerness, begged he would explain himself, and said she hoped he had not thought so insignificant an affair worthy his serious attention.

"There is nothing," answered he, "which requires more immediate notice than impertinence, for it ever incroaches when it is tolerated". He then added, that he believed he

ought to apologise for the liberty he had taken of interfering; but that, as he regarded himself in the light of a party concerned, from having had the honor of dancing with Miss Anville, he could not possibly reconcile to himself a patient neutrality.

He then proceeded to tell her, that he had waited upon Mr. Lovel the morning after the play; that the visit had proved an amicable one, but the particulars were neither entertaining nor necessary; he only assured her, Miss Anville might be perfectly easy; since Mr. Lovel had engaged his honor never more to mention, or even to hint at, what had passed at Mrs. Stanley's assembly.

Mrs. Mirvan expressed her satisfaction at this conclusion, and thanked him for his polite attention to her young friend.

"It would be needless," said he, "to request that this affair may never transpire, since Mrs. Mirvan cannot but see the necessity of keeping it inviolably secret; but I thought it incumbent upon me, as the young lady is under your protection, to assure both you and her of Mr. Lovel's future respect."

Had I known of this visit previous to Lord Orville's making it, what dreadful uneasiness would it have cost me! Yet that he should so

much interest himself, in securing me from offence, gives me, I must own, an internal pleasure, greater than I can express; for I feared he had too contemptuous an opinion of me to take any trouble upon my account: though, after all, this interference might rather be to satisfy his own delicacy than from thinking well of me.

But how cool, how quiet is true courage! Who, from seeing Lord Orville at the play, would have imagined his resentment would have hazarded his life! yet his displeasure was evident, though his real bravery and his politeness equally guarded him from entering into any discussion in our presence.

Madame Duval, as I expected, was most terribly angry yesterday; she scolded me for I believe two hours, on account of having left her, and protested she had been so much surprised at my going, without giving her time to answer, that she hardly knew whether she was awake or asleep; but she assured me that if ever I did so again, she would never more take me into public; and she expressed an equal degree of displeasure against Sir Clement, because he had not even spoken to her, and because he was always of the Captain's side in an argument. The Captain, as bound in honor, warmly defended him; and then followed a dispute in the usual style.

After dinner, Mrs. Mirvan introduced the subject of our leaving London. Madame Duval said she should stay a month or two longer. The Captain told her she was welcome, but that he and his family should go into the country on Tuesday morning.

A most disagreeable scene followed; Madame Duval insisted upon keeping me with her; but Mrs. Mirvan said, that as I was actually engaged on a visit to lady Howard, who had only consented to my leaving her for a few days, she could not think of returning without me.

Perhaps, if the Captain had not interfered, the goodbreeding and mildness of Mrs. Mirvan might have had some effect upon Madame Duval; but he passes no opportunity of provoking her, and therefore made so many gross and rude speeches, all of which she retorted, that, in conclusion, she vowed she would sooner go to law in right of her relationship, than that I should be taken away from her.

I heard this account from Mrs. Mirvan, who was so kindly considerate as to give me a pretence for quitting the room, as soon as this dispute began; lest Madame Duval should refer to me, and insist on my obedience.

The final result of the conversation was, that, to soften matters for the present, Madame Duval should make one in the party for Howard

LETTER XXIII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Queen-Ann-Street, Tuesday, April 29.

THERE is something to me half melancholy, in writing an account of our last adventures in London; however, as this day is merely appropriated to packing, and preparations for our journey, and as I shall shortly have no more adventures to write, I think I may as well complete my town journal at once. And, when you have it all together, I hope, my dear Sir, you will send me your observations and thoughts upon it to Howard Grove.

About eight o'clock we went to the Pantheon. I was extremely struck with the beauty of the building, which greatly surpassed whatever I could have expected or imagined. Yet, it has more the appearance of a chapel, than of a place of diversion; and, though I was quite charmed with the magnificence of the room, I felt that I could not be as gay and thoughtless there as at Ranelagh, for there is something in it which

rather inspires awe and solemnity than mirth and pleasure: however, perhaps it may only have this effect upon such a novice as myself.

I should have said, that our party consisted only of Captain, Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, as Madame Duval spent the day in the city: — which I own I could not lament.

There was a great deal of company; but the first person we saw was Sir Clement Willoughby. He addressed us with his usual ease, and joined us for the whole evening. I felt myself very uneasy in his presence; for I could not look at him, nor hear him speak, without recollecting the chariot adventure; but to my great amazement, I observed that he looked at *me* without the least apparent discomposure, though certainly he ought not to think of his behaviour without blushing. I really wish I had not forgiven him, and then he could not have ventured to speak to me any more.

There was an exceeding good concert, but too much talking to hear it well. Indeed, I am quite astonished to find how little music is attended to in silence; for, though every body seems to admire, hardly any body listens.

We did not see Lord Orville, till we went into the tea-room; which is large, low, and under ground, and serves merely as a foil to the apartments above: he then sat next to us; he seemed

to belong to a large party,' chiefly of ladies; but, among the gentlemen attending them, I perceived Mr. Lovel.

I was extremely irresolute whether or not I ought to make any acknowledgments to Lord Orville for his generous conduct in securing me from the future impertinence of that man; and I thought, that as he had seemed to allow Mrs. Mirvan to acquaint me, though no one else, of the measures which he had taken, he might, perhaps, suppose me ungrateful if silent: however, I might have spared myself the trouble of deliberating, as I never once had the shadow of an opportunity of speaking unheard by Sir Clement; on the contrary, he was so exceedingly officious and forward, that I could not say a word to any body, but instantly he bent his head forward, with an air of profound attention, as if I had addressed myself wholly to him: and yet I never once looked at him, and would not have spoken to him on any account.

Indeed, Mrs. Mirvan herself, though unacquainted with the behaviour of Sir Clement after the opera, says it is not right for a young woman to be seen so frequently in public with the same gentleman; and, if our stay in town was to be lengthened, she would endeavour to represent to the Captain the impropriety of

allowing his constant attendance; for Sir Clement, with all his *easiness*, could not be so eternally of our parties, if the Captain was less fond of his company.

At the same table with Lord Orville, sat a gentleman,—I call him so only because he *was* at the same table,—who, almost from the moment I was seated, fixed his eyes stedfastly on my face, and never once removed them to any other object during tea-time, notwithstanding my dislike of his staring, must, I am sure, have been very evident. I was quite surprised that a man, whose boldness was so offensive, could have gained admission into a party of which Lord Orville made one; for I naturally concluded him to be some lowbred and uneducated man; and I thought my idea was indubitably confirmed, when I heard him say to Sir Clement Willoughby, in an *audible whisper*,—which is a mode of speech very distressing and disagreeable to bystanders,—"For heaven's sake! Willoughby, who is that lovely creature?"

But what was my amazement, when, listening attentively for the answer, though my head was turned another away, I heard Sir Clement say, "I am sorry I cannot inform your Lordship, but I am ignorant myself."

Lordship!—how extraordinary! that a *nobleman*, accustomed, in all probability, to the first

rank of company in the kingdom, from his earliest infancy, can possibly be deficient in *good manners*, however faulty in morals and principles! Even Sir Clement Willoughby appeared modest in comparison with this person.

During tea, a conversation was commenced upon the times, fashions, and public places, in which the company of both tables joined. It began by Sir Clement's inquiring of Miss Mirvan, and of me, if the Pantheon had answered our expectations.

We both readily agreed that it had greatly exceeded them.

"Aye, to be sure!" said the Captain, "why, you don't suppose they'd confess they didn't like it, do you? Whatever's the fashion, they must like of course;—or else, I'd he bound for it, they'd own that there never was such a dull place as this here invented."

"And has, then, this building," said Lord Orville, "no merit that may serve to lessen your censure? Will not your eye, Sir, speak something in its favor?"

"Eye!" cried the Lord, I don't know his name, "and is there any eye here, that can find pleasure in looking at dead walls or statues, when such heavenly living objects as I now see demand all their admiration?"

"Oh, certainly!" said Lord Orville, "the life-

less symmetry of architecture, however beautiful the design and proportion, no man would be so mad as to put in competition with the animated charms of nature: but when, as to-night, the eye may be regaled at the same time, and in one view, with all the excellence of art and all the perfection of nature, I cannot think that either suffer by being seen together."

"I grant, my Lord," said Sir Clement, "that the cool eye of unimpassioned philosophy may view both with equal attention, and equal safety; but, where the heart is not so well guarded, it is apt to interfere, and render, even to the eye, all objects but one insipid and uninteresting."

"Aye, aye!" cried the Captain, "you may talk what you will of your eye here and your eye there, and, for the matter of that, to be sure you have two,—but we all know they both squint one way."

"Far be it from me," said Lord Orville, "to dispute the *magnetic* power of beauty, which irresistibly draws and attracts whatever has soul and sympathy: and I am happy to acknowledge, that, though we have now no *gods* to occupy a mansion professedly built for them, yet we have secured their *better halves*, for we have *goddesses* to whom we all most willingly bow down."

And then, with a very droll air, he made a profound reverence to the ladies.

"They'd need be goddesses, with a vengeance!" said the Captain, "for they're mortal dear to look at! howsomever, I should be glad to know what you can see, in e'er a face among them, that's worth half a guinea for the sight."

"Half a guinea!" exclaimed that same Lord, "I would give half I am worth, for a sight of only *one*, provided I make my own choice: and, prithee, how can money be better employed, than in the service of fine women?"

"If the ladies of his own party can pardon the Captain's speech," said Sir Clement, "I think he has a fair claim to the forgiveness of all."

"Then you depend very much, as I doubt not but you may," said Lord Orville, "upon the general sweetness of the sex;—but, as to the ladies of the Captain's party, they may easily pardon, for they cannot be hurt."

"But they must have a devilish good conceit of themselves, though," said the Captain, "to believe all that! howsomever, whether or no, I should be glad to be told by some of you, who seem to be knowing in them things, what kind of diversion can be found in such a place as this here, for one who has had, long ago, his full of face-hunting?"

Every body laughed, but nobody spoke.

"Why, look you there now!" continued the Captain, "you're all at a dead stand!—not a man among you can answer that there question. Why, then, I must make bold to conclude, that you all come here for no manner of purpose but to stare at one another's pretty faces;—though, for the matter of that, half of 'em are plaguy ugly,—and, as to t'other half,—I believe it's none of God's manufactory."

"What the ladies may come hither for, Sir," said Mr. Lovel, stroking his ruffles, and looking down, "it would ill become *us* to determine; but as to we men, doubtless we can have no other view than to admire them."

"If I been't mistaken," cried the Captain, looking earnestly in his face, "you are that same person we saw at Love for Love t'other night, been't you?"

Mr. Lovel bowed.

"Why then, Gentlemen," continued he, with a loud laugh, "I must tell you a most excellent good joke;—when all was over, as sure as you're alive, he asked what the play was!. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sir," said Mr. Lovel, coloring, "if you were as much used to a town life as I am,—which, I presume, is not precisely the case,—I fancy you would not find so much diversion from a circumstance so common."

"Common! what, is it common?" repeated the Captain; "why, then, 'fore George! such chaps are more fit to be sent to school, and well disciplined with a cat o' nine tails, than to poke their heads into a playhouse. Why, a play is the only thing left, now-a-days, that has a grain of sense in it; for as to all the rest of your public places, d'ye see! if they were all put together, I wouldn't give *that* for 'em!"—snapping his fingers. "And now we're talking of them sort of things, there's your operas,—I should like to know, now, what any of you can find to say for them."

Lord Orville, who was most able to have answered, seemed by no means to think the Captain worthy an argument upon a subject, concerning which he had neither knowledge nor feeling: but, turning to us, he said, "The ladies are silent, and we seem to have engrossed the conversation to ourselves, in which we are much more our own enemies than theirs:"— but, addressing himself to Miss Mirvan and me, "I am most desirous to hear the opinions of these young ladies, to whom all public places must, as yet, be new."

We both, and with eagerness, declared that we had received as much, if not more pleasure, at the opera than any where: but we had better have been silent; for the Captain, quite displeased,

said, "What signifies asking them girls? Do you think they know their own minds yet? Ask 'em after any thing that's called diversion, and you're sure they'll say it's vastly fine;—they are a set of parrots, and speak by rote, for they all say the same thing: but ask 'em how they like making puddings and pies, and I'll warrant you'll pose 'em. As to them operas, I desire I may hear no more of their liking such nonsense; and for you, Moll," to his daughter, "I charge you, as you value my favor, that you'll never again be so impertinent as to have a taste of your own before my face. There are fools enough in the world, without your adding to their number. I'll have no daughter of mine affect them sort of megrims. It is a shame they a'n't put down; and if I'd my will, there's not a magistrate in this town, but should be knocked of the head for suffering them. If you've a mind to praise any thing, why you may praise a play, and welcome, for I like it myself."

This reproof effectually silenced us both for the rest of the evening. Nay, indeed, for some minutes it seemed to silence everybody else; till Mr. Lovel, not willing to lose an opportunity of returning the Captain's sarcasm, said, "Why, really Sir, it is but natural to be most pleased with what is most familiar, and, I think of all our diversions, there is not one so much in

common between us and the country, as a play. Not a village but has its barns and comedians; and as for the stage business, why it may be pretty equally done any where; and even in regard to *us* and the *canaille*, confined as we all are within the semicircle of a theatre, there is no place where the distinction is less obvious."

While the Captain seemed considering for Mr. Lovel's meaning, Lord Orville, probably with a view to prevent his finding it, changed the subject to Cox's Museum, and asked what he thought of it?

"Think!"—said he, "why I think as how it i'n't worth thinking about; I like no such *jem-cracks*: it is only fit, in my mind, for monkeys; though, for aught I know, they too might turn up their noses at it."

"May we ask your Lordship's own opinion?" said Mrs. Mirvan.

"The mechanism," answered he, "is wonderfully ingenious: I am sorry it is turned to no better account; but its purport is so frivolous, so very remote from all aim at instruction or utility, that the sight of so fine a show only leaves a regret on the mind, that so much work, and so much ingenuity, should not be better bestowed."

"The truth is," said the Captain, "that in

all this huge town, so full as it is of folks of all sorts, there i'n't so much as one public place, besides the play house, where a man, that's to say, a man who *is* a man, ought not to be ashamed to show his face. T'other day they got me to a ridotto; but I believe it will be long enough before they get me to another. I knew no more what to do with myself, than if my ship's company had been metamorphosed into Frenchmen. Then, again, there's your famous Ranelagh, that you make such a fuss about—why what a dull place is that!—it's the worst of all."

"Ranelagh dull!"—"Ranelagh dull!" was echoed from mouth to mouth; and all the ladies, as if of one accord, regarded the Captain with looks of the most ironical contempt.

"As to Ranelagh," said Mr. Lovel, "most indubitably, though the price is plebeian, it is by no means adapted to the plebeian taste. It requires a certain acquaintance with high life, and—and—and something of—of—something *d'un vrai goût*, to be really sensible of its merit. Those whose—whose connexions, and so forth, are not among *les gens comme il faut*, can feel nothing but *ennui* at such a place as Ranelagh."

"Ranelagh!" cried Lord —, "Oh, 'tis the divinest place under heaven,—or indeed,—for aught I know——"

"Oh, you creature!"—cried a pretty but

affected young lady, patting him with her fan, "you sha'n't talk so; I know what you are going to say; but; positively, I wont't sit by you, if you're so wicked."

"And how can one sit by you, and be good?" said he, "when only to look at you is enough to make one wicked—or wish to be so?"

"Fie, my Lord!" returned she, "you are really insufferable. I don't think I shall speak to you again these seven years."

"What a metamorphosis," cried Lord Orville, "should you make a patriarch of his Lordship!"

"Seven years!" said he, "dear Madam! be contented with telling me you will not speak to me *after* seven years, and I will endeavour to submit."

"Oh, very well! my Lord," answered she, "pray date the end of our speaking to each other as early as you please, I'll promise to agree to your time."

"You know, dear Madam," said he, sipping his tea, "you know I only live in your sight."

"O yes, my Lord! I have long known that. But I begin to fear we shall be too late for Ranelagh this evening."

"O no, Madam!" said Mr. Lovel, looking at his watch, "it is but just past ten."

"No more!" cried she; "Oh, then, we shall do very well."

All the ladies now started up, and declared they had no time to lose.

"Why, what the devil!" cried the Captain, leaning forward with both his arms on the table, "are you going to Ranelagh at this time of night?"

The ladies looked at one another, and smiled.

"To Ranelagh?" cried Lord —, "Yes, and I hope you are going too; for we cannot possibly excuse these ladies."

"I go to Ranelagh?—if I do, I'll be——."

Every body now stood up, and the stranger Lord, coming round to me, said, "*You* go, I hope?"

"No, my Lord! I believe not."

"Oh, you cannot—must not be so barbarous." And he took my hand and ran on, saying such fine speeches and compliments, that I might almost have supposed myself a goddess, and him a pagan, paying me adoration. As soon as I possibly could, I drew back my hand; but he frequently, in the course of conversation, contrived to take it again, though it was extremely disagreeable to me; and the more so, as I saw that Lord Orville had his eyes fixed upon us with a gravity of attention that made me uneasy.

And, surely, my dear Sir! it was a great liberty in this Lord, notwithstanding his rank,

to treat me so freely. As to Sir Clement, he seemed in misery.

They all endeavoured to prevail with the Captain to join the Ranelagh party; and this Lord told me, in a low voice, that *it was tearing his heart out* to go without me.

During this conversation, Mr. Lovel came forward, and assuming a look of surprise, made me a bow, and inquired how I did, protesting, upon his honor, that he had not seen me before, or would sooner have paid his respects to me.

Though his politeness was evidently constrained, yet I was very glad to be thus assured of having nothing more to fear from him.

The Captain, far from listening to their persuasions of accompanying them to Ranelagh, was quite in a passion at the proposal, and vowed he would sooner go to the *Black hole in Calcutta*.

"But," said Lord —, "if the *ladies* will take their tea at Ranelagh, you may depend upon our seeing them safe home; for we shall all be proud of the honor of attending them."

"May be so!" said the Captain; "but I'll tell you what, if one of these places been't enough for them to night, why to-morrow they shall go to ne'er a one."

We instantly declared ourselves very ready to go home.

"It is not for yourselves that we petition," said Lord —, but for *us*; if you have any charity, you will not be so cruel as to deny us; we only beg you to prolong our happiness for a few minutes,—the favor is but a small one for you to grant, though so great a one for us to receive."

"To tell you a piece of my mind," said the Captain, surlily, "I think you might as well not give the girls so much of this palaver: they'll take it all for gospel. As to Moll, why she's well enough, but nothing extraordinary, though, perhaps, you may persuade her that her pug-nose is all the fashion: and as to the other, why she's good white and red to be sure; but what of that?—I'll warrant she'll moulder away as fast as her neighbours."

"Is there," cried Lord —, "another man in this place, who, seeing such objects, could make such a speech?"

"As to that there," returned the Captain, "I don't know whether there be or no, and, to make free, I don't care; for I sha'n't go for to model myself by any of these fair-weather chaps, who dare not so much as say their souls are their own,—and, for aught I know, no more they been't. I'm almost as much ashamed of my countrymen, as if I was a Frenchman; and I believe in my heart there i'n't a pin to

choose between them; and, before long, we shall hear the very sailors talking that lingo, and see never a swabber without a bag and a sword."

"He, he, he!—well, 'pon honor!" cried Mr. Lovel, "you gentlemen of the ocean have a most severe way of judging."

"Severe! 'fore George! that is impossible; for, to cut the matter short, the men, as they call themselves, are no better than monkeys; and as to the women, why, they are mere dolls. So now you've got my opinion of this subject; and so I wish you good night."

The ladies, who were very impatient to be gone, made their curtsies and tripped away, followed by all the gentlemen of their party, except the Lord I have before mentioned and Lord Orville, who staid to make inquiries of Mrs. Mirvan concerning our leaving town; and then saying, with his usual politeness, something civil to each of us, with a very grave air, he quitted us.

Lord — remained some minutes longer, which he spent in making a profusion of compliments to me, by which he prevented my hearing distinctly what Lord Orville said, to my great vexation, especially as he looked—I thought so, at least,—as if displeased at his particularity of behaviour to me.

In going to an outward room, to wait for

the carriage, I walked, and could not possibly avoid it, between this nobleman and Sir Clement Willoughby; and, when the servant said the coach stopped the way, though the latter offered me his hand, which I should much have preferred, this same Lord, without any ceremony took mine himself; and Sir Clement, with a look extremely provoked, conducted Mrs. Mirvan.

In all ranks and all stations of life, how strangely do characters and manners differ! Lord Orville, with a politeness which knows no intermission and makes no distinction, is as unassuming and modest, as if he had never mixed with the great, and was totally ignorant of every qualification he possesses; this other Lord, though lavish of compliments and fine speeches, seems to me an entire stranger to real goodbreeding; whoever strikes his fancy, engrosses his whole attention; he is forward and bold, has an air of haughtiness towards men, and a look of libertinism towards women; and his conscious quality seems to have given him a freedom in his way of speaking, to either sex, that is very little short of rudeness.

When we returned home, we were all low-spirited; the evening's entertainment had displeased the Captain; and his displeasure, I believe, disconcerted us all.

And here I thought to have concluded my letter; but, to my great surprise, just now we had a visit from Lord Orville. He called, he said, to pay his respects to us before we left town, and made many inquiries concerning our return; and, when Mrs. Mirvan told him we were going into the country without any view of again quitting it, he expressed his concern in such terms—so polite, so flattering, so serious—that I could hardly forbear being sorry myself. Were I to go immediately to Berry Hill, I am sure I should feel nothing but joy;—but, now we are joined by this Captain and by Madame Duval, I must own I expect very little pleasure at Howard Grove.

Before Lord Orville went, Sir Clement Willoughby called. He was more grave than I had ever seen him, and made several attempts to speak to me in a low voice, and to assure me that his regret upon the occasion of our journey was entirely upon my account: but I was not in spirits, and could not bear to be teized by him: however, he has so well paid his court to Captain Mirvan, that he gave him a very hearty invitation to the Grove. At this, he brightened—and, just then, Lord Orville took leave.

No doubt but he was disgusted at this ill-timed, illbred partiality;—for, surely, it was

very wrong to make an invitation before Lord Orville, in which he was not included! I was so much chagrined, that, as soon as he went, I left the room; and I shall not go down stairs till Sir Clement is gone.

Lord Orville cannot but observe his assiduous endeavours to ingratiate himself into my favor; and does not this extravagant civility of Captain Mirvan give him reason to suppose that it meets with our general approbation? I cannot think upon this subject without inexpressible uneasiness;—and yet, I can think of nothing else.

Adieu, my dearest Sir! Pray write to me immediately. How many long letters has this one short fortnight produced! More than I may, probably, ever write again: I fear I shall have tired you with reading them; but you will now have time to rest, for I shall find but little to say in future.

And now, most honored Sir! with all the follies and imperfections which I have thus faithfully recounted, can you, and with unabated kindness, suffer me to sign myself

Your dutiful

and most affectionate

EVELINA.

LETTER XXIV.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry Hill, April 22.

HOW much do I rejoice that I can again address my letters to Howard Grove! My Evelina would have grieved, had she known the anxiety of my mind during her residence in the great world. My apprehensions have been inexpressibly alarming; and your journal, at once exciting and relieving my fears, has almost wholly occupied me since the time of your dating it from London.

Sir Clement Willoughby must be an artful designing man; I am extremely irritated at his conduct. The passion he pretends for you has neither sincerity nor honor; the manner and the opportunities he has chosen to declare it are bordering upon insult.

His unworthy behaviour, after the opera convinces me, that, — had not your vehemence frightened him,—Queen-Ann-street would have been the last place whither he would have

ordered his chariot. O my child! how thankful am I for your escape! I need not now, I am sure, enlarge upon your indiscretion and want of thought, in so hastily trusting yourself with a man so little known to you, and whose gaiety and flightiness should have put you on your guard.

The nobleman you met at the Pantheon, bold and forward as you describe him to be, gives me no apprehension; a man who appears so openly licentious, and who makes his attack with so little regard to decorum, is one, who, to a mind such as my Evelina's, can never be seen but with the disgust which his manners ought to excite.

But Sir Clement, though he seeks occasion to give real offence, contrives to avoid all appearance of intentional evil. He is far more dangerous, because more artful; but I am happy to observe, that he seems to have made no impression upon your heart; and, therefore, a very little care and prudence may secure you from those designs which I fear he has formed.

Lord Orville appears to be of a better order of beings. His spirited conduct to the meanly impertinent Lovel, and his anxiety for you after the opera, prove him to be a man of sense and of feeling. Doubtless, he thought there

was much reason to tremble for your safety, while exposed to the power of Sir Clement; and he acted with a regard to real honor that will always incline me to think well of him, in so immediately acquainting the Mirvan family with your situation. Many men of this age, from a false and pretended delicacy to a friend, would have quietly pursued their own affairs, and thought it more honorable to leave an unsuspecting young creature to the mercy of a libertine, than to risk his displeasure by taking measures for her security.

Your evident concern, at leaving London, is very natural; and yet it afflicts me. I ever dreaded your being too much pleased with a life of dissipation, which youth and vivacity render but too alluring; and I almost regret the consent for your journey, which I had not the resolution to withhold.

Alas, my child! the artlessness of your nature and the simplicity of your education alike unfit you for the thorny paths of the great and busy world! The supposed obscurity of your birth and situation makes you liable to a thousand disagreeable adventures. Not only my views, but my hopes for your future life, have ever centered in the country. Shall I own to you, that, however I may differ from Captain Mirvan in other respects, yet my opinion of the town, its

manners, inhabitants, and diversions, is much upon a level with his own? Indeed it is the general harbor of fraud and of folly, of duplicity and of impertinence; and I wish few things more fervently, than that you may have taken a lasting leave of it.

Remember, however, that I only speak in regard to a public and dissipated life; in private families, we may doubtless find as much goodness, honesty, and virtue, in London as in the country.

If contented with a retired station, I still hope I shall live to see my Evelina the ornament of her neighbourhood, and the pride and delight of her family: giving and receiving joy from such society as may best deserve her affection, and employing herself in such useful and innocent occupations as may secure and merit the tenderest love of her friends and the worthiest satisfaction of her own heart.

Such are my hopes, and such have been my expectations! Disappoint them not, my beloved child! but cheer me with a few lines, that may assure me this one short fortnight, spent in town, has not undone the work of seventeen years spent in the country.

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XXV.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, April 25.

NO, my dear Sir, no! *the work of seventeen years* remains such as it was, ever unworthy your time and your labor, but not more so now,—at least I hope not,—than before that fortnight which has so much alarmed you.

And yet, I must confess, that I am not half so happy here at present, as I was ere I went to town: but the change is in the place, not in me. Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval have ruined Howard Grove. The harmony that reigned here is disturbed, our schemes are broken, our way of life is altered, and our comfort is destroyed. But do not suppose *London* to be the source of these evils; for, had our excursion been any where else, so disagreeable an addition to our household must have caused the same change at our return.

I was sure you would be displeased with Sir Clement Willoughby, and therefore I am by no

means surprised at what you say of him: but for Lord Orville—I must own, I had greatly feared that my weak and imperfect account would not have procured him the good opinion which he so well deserves, and which I am delighted to find you seem to have of him. Oh, Sir! could I have done justice to the merit of which I believe him possessed,—could I have painted him to *you* such as he appeared to *me*,—then, indeed, you would have had some idea of the claim which he has to your approbation!

After the last letter which I wrote in town, nothing more passed previous to our journey hither, except a very violent quarrel between Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval. As the Captain intended to travel on horseback, he had settled that we four females should make use of his coach. Madame Duval did not come to Queen-Ann-street till the carriage had waited some time at the door; and then, attended by Monsieur Du Bois, she made her appearance.

The Captain, impatient to be gone, would not suffer them to enter the house, but insisted that we should immediately get into the coach. We obeyed; but were no sooner seated, than Madame Duval said, "Come, Monsieur Du Bois, these girls can make very good room for you; sit closer, children."

Mrs. Mirvan looked quite confounded, and M Du Bois, after making some apologies about crowding us, actually got into the coach, on the side with Miss Mirvan and me. But no sooner was he seated, than the Captain, who had observed this transaction very quietly, walked up to the coach door, saying, "What, neither with your leave, nor by your leave?"

M. Du Bois seemed rather shocked, and began to make abundance of excuses; but the Captain neither understood nor regarded him, and, very roughly, said, "Look'ee, *Monseer*, this here may be a French fashion, for aught I know; — but Give and take is fair in all nations; and so now, d'ye, see I'll make bold to show you an English one."

And then, seizing his wrist, he made him jump out of the coach.

M. Du Bois instantly put his hand upon his sword, and threatened to resent this indignity. The Captain, holding up his stick, bid him draw at his peril. Mrs. Mirvan, greatly alarmed, got out of the coach, and, standing between them, intreated her husband to re-enter the house.

"None of your clack!" cried he, angrily, "what the devil! do you suppose I can't manage a Frenchman?"

Mean time, Madame Duval called out to

M. Du Bois, "*Eh, laissez-le, mon ami! ne le corrigez pas; c'est un vilain bête qui n'en vaut pas la peine.*"

"*Monsieur le Capitaine,*" cried M. Du Bois, "*voulez-vous bien me demander pardon?*"

"Oh, ho! you demand pardon, do you?" said the Captain, "I thought as much; I thought you'd come to; — so you have lost your relish for an English salutation, have you?" strutting up to him with looks of defiance.

A crowd was now gathering, and Mrs. Mirvan again besought her husband to go into the house.

"Why what a plague is the woman afraid of? — did you ever know a Frenchman that could not take an affront? — I warrant, *Monseer* knows what he is about;—don't you, *Monseer?*"

M. Du Bois, not understanding him, only said, "*plait-il, Monsieur?*"

"No, nor *dish* me, neither!" answered the Captain; "but be that as it may, what signifies our parleying here? If you've any thing to propose, speak at once; if not, why let us go on our journey without more ado."

"*Parbleu, je n'entends rien, moi!*" cried M. Du Bois, shrugging his shoulders, and looking very dismal.

Mrs. Mirvan then advanced to him, and said, in French, that she was sure the Captain had

not any intention to affront him, and begged he would desist from a dispute which could only be productive of mutual misunderstanding, as neither of them knew the language of the other.

This sensible remonstrance had the desired effect; and M. Du Bois, making a bow to every one except the Captain, very wisely gave up the point, and took leave.

We then hoped to proceed quietly on our journey; but the turbulent Captain would not yet permit us: he approached Madame Duval with an exulting air, and said, "Why how's this, Madam? what, has your champion deserted you? why I thought you told me, that you old gentlewomen had it all your own way among them French sparks?"

"As to that, Sir," answered she, "it's not of no consequence what you thought; for a person who can behave in such a low way, may think what he pleases for me, for I shan't mind."

"Why, then, Mistress, since you must needs make so free," cried he, "please to tell me the reason why you took the liberty for to ask any of your followers into my coach, without my leave? Answer me to that."

"Why, then, pray, Sir!" returned she, "tell me the reason why you took the liberty to treat the gentleman in such an unpolite way, as to take and pull him neck and heels out? I'm sure he

hadn't done nothing to affront you, nor nobody else; and I don't know what great hurt he would have done you, by just sitting still in the coach; he would not have eat it."

"What! do you think, then, that my horses have nothing to do, but to carry about your snivelling Frenchmen? If you do, Madam, I must make bold to tell you, you are out, for I'll see 'em hanged first."

"More brute you, then! for they've never carried nobody half so good."

"Why, look'ee, Madam, if you must needs provoke me, I'll tell you a piece of my mind; you must know, I can see as far into a millstone as another man; and so, if you thought for to fobb me off with one of your smirking French puppies for a son-in-law, why you'll find yourself in a hobble,—that's all."

"Sir, you're a—but I won't say what;—but, I protest, I hadn't no such thought; no more hadn't Monsieur Du Bois."

"My dear!" said Mrs. Mirvan, "we shall be very late."

"Well, well!" answered he, "get away then; off with you, as fast as you can; it's high time. As to Molly, she's fine lady enough in all conscience; I want none of your French chaps to make her worse."

And so saying, he mounted his horse, and we

drove off. And I could not but think with regret of the different feelings we experienced upon leaving London, to what had belonged to our entering it!

During the journey, Madame Duval was so very violent against the Captain, that she obliged Mrs. Mirvan to tell her, that, when in her presence, she must beg her to choose some other subject of discourse.

We had a most affectionate reception from Lady Howard, whose kindness and hospitality cannot fail of making every body happy who is disposed so to be.

Adieu, my dearest Sir!—I hope, though I have hitherto neglected to mention it, that you have always remembered me to whoever has made any inquiry concerning me.

LETTER XXVI.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, April 27.

OH, my dear Sir, I now write in the greatest uneasiness! Madame Duval has made a proposal which terrifies me to death, and which was as unexpected as it is shocking.

She had been employed for some hours this afternoon in reading letters from London; and, just about tea-time, she sent for me into her room, and said, with a look of great satisfaction, "Come here, child! I've got some very good news to tell you; something that will surprise you, I'll give you my word, for you ha'n't no notion of it."

I begged her to explain herself; and then, in terms which I cannot repeat, she said she had been considering what a shame it was, to see me such a poor, country, shame-faced thing, when I ought to be a fine lady; and that she had long, and upon several occasions, blushed for me, though she must own the fault was none of mine:

for nothing better could be expected from a girl who had been so immured: however, she assured me, she had, at length, hit upon a plan, which would make quite another creature of me.

I waited without much impatience, to hear what this preface led to; but I was soon awakened to more lively sensations, when she acquainted me, that her intention was to prove my birthright, and to claim, by law, the inheritance of my real family!

It would be impossible for me to express my extreme consternation, when she thus unfolded her scheme. My surprise and terror were equally great. I could say nothing; I heard her with a silence which I had not the power to break.

She then expatiated very warmly upon the advantages I should reap from her plan; talked in a high style of my future grandeur; assured me how heartily I should despise almost every body and every thing I had hitherto seen; predicted my marrying into some family of the first rank in the kingdom; and, finally, said I should spend a few months in Paris, where my education and manners might receive their last polish.

She enlarged also upon the delight she should have, in common with myself, from mortifying the pride of certain people, and showing them that she was not to be slighted with impunity.

In the midst of this discourse, I was relieved by a summons to tea. Madame Duval was in great spirits; but, my emotion was too painful for concealment, and every body inquired into the cause. I would fain have waved the subject, but Madame Duval was determined to make it public. She told them, that she had it in her head to *make something* of me, and that they should soon call me by another name than that of Anville; and yet that she was not going to have the child married, neither.

I could not endure to hear her proceed, and was going to leave the room; which when Lady Howard perceived, she begged Madame Duval would defer her intelligence to some other opportunity; but she was so eager to communicate her scheme, that she could bear no delay, and therefore they suffered me to go without opposition. Indeed, whenever my situation or affairs are mentioned by Madame Duval, she speaks of them with such bluntness and severity, that I cannot be enjoined a task more cruel than to hear her.

I was afterwards acquainted with some particulars of the conversation by Miss Mirvan, who told me that Madame Duval informed them of her plan with the utmost complacency, and seemed to think herself very fortunate in having suggested it; but soon after, she accidentally betrayed that she had been instigated to the

scheme by her relations the Branghtons, whose letters, which she received to-day, first mentioned the proposal. She declared that she would have nothing to do with any *round-about ways*, but go openly and instantly to law, in order to prove my birth, real name, and title, to the estate of my ancestors.

How impertinent and officious, in these Branghtons, to interfere thus in my concerns! You can hardly imagine what a disturbance this plan has made in the family. The Captain, without inquiring into any particulars of the affair, has peremptorily declared himself against it, merely because it has been proposed by Madame Duval, and they have battled the point together with great violence. Mrs. Mirvan says she will not even *think*, till she hears your opinion:—but Lady Howard, to my great surprise, openly avows her approbation of Madame Duval's intention: however, she will write her reasons and sentiments upon the subject to you herself.

As to Miss Mirvan, she is my second self, and neither hopes nor fears but as I do:—and as to *me*, —I know not what to say, nor even what to wish; I have often thought my fate peculiarly cruel to have but one parent, and from that one to be banished for ever;—while, on the other side, I have but too well known and felt the pro-

priety of the separation: — and yet, you may much better imagine than I can express the internal anguish which sometimes oppresses my heart, when I reflect upon the strange indifferency that must occasion a father never to make the least inquiry after the health, the welfare, or even the life of his child!

Oh, Sir! to *me* the loss is nothing!—greatly, sweetly, and most benevolently, have you guarded me from feeling it;—but for *him*, I grieve indeed!—I must be divested, not merely of all filial piety, but of all humanity, could I ever think upon this subject, and not be wounded to the soul.

Again I must repeat, I know not what to *wish*: think for me, therefore, my dearest Sir! and suffer my doubting mind, that knows not which way to direct its hopes, to be guided by your wisdom and unerring counsel.

EVELINA.

LETTER XXVII.

LADY HOWARD TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove.

DEAR SIR,

I CANNOT give a greater proof of the high opinion I have of your candor, than by the liberty I am now going to take of presuming to offer you advice upon a subject, concerning which you have so just a claim to act for yourself: but I know you have too unaffected a love of justice, to be partially tenacious of your own judgment.

Madame Duval has been proposing a scheme which has put us all in commotion; and against which, at first, in common with the rest of my family, I exclaimed; but upon more mature consideration, I own my objections have almost wholly vanished.

This scheme is no other than to commence a lawsuit with Sir John Belmont, to prove the validity of his marriage with Miss Evelyn; the necessary consequence of which proof will be securing his fortune and estate to his daughter.

And why, my dear Sir! should not this be? I know that, upon first hearing, such a plan conveys ideas that must shock you; but I know, too, that your mind is superior to being governed by prejudices, or to opposing any important cause on account of a few disagreeable attendant circumstances.

Your lovely charge, now first entering into life, has merit which ought not to be buried in obscurity. She seems born for an ornament to the world. Nature has been bountiful to her of whatever she had to bestow; and the peculiar attention you have given to her education has formed her mind to a degree of excellence, that, in one so young, I have scarce ever seen equalled. Fortune, alone, has hitherto been sparing of her gifts; and she, too, now opens the way which leads to all that is left to wish for her.

What your reasons may have been, my good Sir! for so carefully concealing the birth, name, and pretensions of this amiable girl, and forbearing to make any claim upon Sir John Belmont, I am totally a stranger to; but, without knowing, I respect them, from the high opinion I have of your character and judgment: but I hope they are not insuperable; for I cannot but think that it was never designed for one, who seems meant to grace the world, to have her life devoted to retirement.

Surely Sir John Belmont, wretch as he has shown himself, could never see his accomplished daughter, and not be proud to own her, and eager to secure her the inheritance of his fortune. The admiration she met with in town, though merely the effect of her external attractions, was such that Mrs. Mirvan assures me she would have had the most splendid offers, had there not seemed to be some mystery in regard to her birth, which, she was well informed, was assiduously, though vainly, endeavoured to be discovered.

Can it be right, my dear Sir! that this promising young creature should be deprived of the fortune and rank of life to which she is lawfully entitled, and which you have prepared her to support and to use so nobly? To despise riches may, indeed, be philosophic; but to dispense them worthily must, surely, be more beneficial to mankind.

Perhaps a few years, or, indeed, a much shorter time, may make this scheme impracticable: Sir John, though yet young, leads a life too dissipated for long duration; and, when too late, we may regret that something was not sooner done; for it will be next to impossible, after he is gone, to settle or prove any thing with his heirs and executors.

Pardon the earnestness with which I write my

sense of this affair; but your charming ward has made me so warmly her friend, that I cannot be indifferent upon a subject of such importance to her future life.

Adieu, my dear Sir!—send me speedily an answer to this remonstrance, and believe me to be, etc.

M. Howard.

LETTER XXVIII.

MR. VILLARS TO LADY HOWARD.

Berry-Hill, May 2.

YOUR letter, Madam, has opened a source of anxiety to which I look forward with dread, and which to see closed I scarcely dare expect. I am unwilling to oppose my opinion to that of your Ladyship; nor, indeed, can I, but by arguments which, I believe, will rather rank me as a hermit, ignorant of the world, and fit only for my cell, than as a proper guardian, in an age such as this, for an accomplished young woman. Yet, thus called upon, it behoves me to explain, and endeavour to vindicate, the reasons by which I have been hitherto guided.

The mother of this dear child,—who was led to destruction by her own imprudence, the hardness of heart of Madame Duval, and the villany of Sir John Belmont,—was once, what her daughter is now, the best beloved of my heart; and her memory, so long as my own holds, I shall love, mourn, and honor! On the fatal day that

her gentle soul left its mansion; and not many hours ere she ceased to breathe, I solemnly plighted my faith, *That her child, if it lived, should know no father but myself or her acknowledged husband.*

You cannot, Madam, suppose that I found much difficulty in adhering to this promise, and forbearing to make any *claim* upon Sir John Belmont. Could I feel an affection the most paternal for this poor sufferer, and not abominate her destroyer? Could I wish to deliver to *him*, who had so basely betrayed the mother, the helpless and innocent offspring, who, born in so much sorrow, seemed entitled to all the compassionate tenderness of pity?

For many years, the *name* alone of that man, accidentally spoken in my hearing, almost divested me of my christianity, and scarce could I forbear to execrate him. Yet I sought not, neither did I desire, to deprive him of his child; had he, with any appearance of contrition, or, indeed, of humanity, endeavoured to become less unworthy such a blessing;—but he is a stranger to all parental feelings, and his, with a savage insensibility, forborn to inquire even into the existence of this sweet orphan, though the situation of his injured wife was but too well known to him.

You wish to be acquainted with my intentions.—I must acknowledge they were such as

I now perceive would not be honored with your Ladyship's approbation: for though I have sometimes thought of presenting Evelina to her father, and demanding the justice which is her due, yet, at other times, I have both disdained and feared the application; disdained, lest it should be refused,—and feared, lest it should be accepted!

Lady Belmont, who was firmly persuaded of her approaching dissolution, frequently and earnestly besought me, that, if her infant was a female, I would not abandon her to the direction of a man so wholly unfit to take the charge of her education; but, should she be importunately demanded, that I would retire with her abroad, and carefully conceal her from Sir John, till some apparent change in his sentiments and conduct should announce him less improper for such a trust. And often would she say, "Should the poor babe have any feelings correspondent with its mother's, it will have no want while under your protection." Alas! she had no sooner quitted it herself, than she was plunged into a gulf of misery,' that swallowed up her peace, reputation, and life.

During the childhood of Evelina, I suggested a thousand plans for the security of her birthright;—but I as oftentimes rejected them. I was in a perpetual conflict, between the desire that she should have justice done her, and the ap-

prehension that, while I improved her fortune, I should endanger her mind. However, as her character began to be formed, and her disposition to be displayed, my perplexity abated; the road before me seemed less thorny and intricate, and I thought I could perceive the right path from the wrong: for, when I observed the artless openness, the ingenuous simplicity of her nature; when I saw that her guileless and innocent soul fancied all the world to be pure and disinterested as herself, and that her heart was open to every impression with which love, pity, or art, might assail it; —then did I flatter myself, that to follow my own inclination, and to secure her welfare, was the same thing; since, to expose her to the snares and dangers inevitably encircling a house of which the master is dissipated and unprincipled, without the guidance of a mother, or any prudent and sensible female, seemed to me no less than suffering her to stumble into some dreadful pit, when the sun was in its meridian. My plan, therefore, was not merely to educate and to cherish her as my own, but to adopt her the heiress of my small fortune, and to bestow her upon some worthy man, with whom she might spend her days in tranquillity, cheerfulness, and goodhumor; untainted by vice, folly, or ambition.

So much for the time past. Such have been the motives by which I have been governed; and I hope they will be allowed not merely to account for, but also to justify, the conduct which has resulted from them. It now remains to speak of the time to come.

And here, indeed, I am sensible of difficulties, which I almost despair of surmounting according to my wishes. I pay the highest deference to your Ladyship's opinion, which it is extremely painful to me not to concur with; yet, I am so well acquainted with your goodness, that I presume to hope it would not be absolutely impossible for me to offer such arguments as might lead you to think with me, that this young creature's chance of happiness seems less doubtful in retirement than it would be in the gay and dissipated world: but why should I perplex your Ladyship with reasoning that can turn to so little account? for, alas! what arguments, what persuasions can I make use of, with any prospect of success, to such a woman as Madame Duval? Her character, and the violence of her disposition, intimidate me from making the attempt: she is too ignorant for instruction, too obstinate for intreaty, and too weak for reason.

I will not, therefore, enter into a contest from which I have nothing to expect but al-

recreation and impertinence. As soon would I discuss the effect of sound with the deaf, or the nature of colors with the blind, as aim at illuminating with conviction a mind so warped By prejudice, so much the slave of unruly and illiberal passions. Unused as she is to controll, persuasion would but harden, and opposition incense her: I yield, therefore, to the necessity which compels my reluctant acquiescence, and shall now turn all my thoughts upon considering of such methods for the conducting this enterprise, as may be most conducive to the happiness of my child, and least liable to wound her sensibility.

The lawsuit, therefore, I wholly and absolutely disapprove.

Will you, my dear Madam, forgive the freedom of an old man, if I own myself greatly surprised, that you could, even for a moment, listen to a plan so violent, so public, so totally repugnant to all female delicacy? I am satisfied your Ladyship has not weighed this project. There was a time, indeed, when, to assert the innocence of Lady Belmont, to blazon to the world the *wrongs*, not *guilt*, by which she suffered, I proposed—nay, attempted—a similar plan: but then, all assistance and encouragement was denied. How cruel to the remembrance I bear to her woes, is this tardy resentment of

Madame Duval! she was deaf to the voice of nature, though she has hearkened to that of ambition.

Never can I consent to have this dear and timid girl brought forward to the notice of the world by such a method;—a method, which will subject her to all the impertinence of curiosity, the sneers of conjecture, and the stings of ridicule. And for what?—the attainment of wealth, which she does not want; and the gratification of vanity, which she does not feel.—A child to appear against a father!—no, Madam, old and infirm as I am, I would even yet sooner convey her myself to some remote part of the world, though I were sure of dying in the expedition.

Far different had been the motives which would have stimulated her unhappy mother to such a proceeding; all her felicity in this world was irretrievably lost: her life was become a burthen to her; and her fair fame, which she had early been taught to prize above all other things, had received a mortal wound: therefore, to clear her own honor, and to secure from blemish the birth of her child, was all the good which Fortune had reserved herself the *power* of bestowing. But even this last consolation was withheld from her!

Let milder measures be adopted; and—since

it must be so,—let application be made to Sir John Belmont; but as to a lawsuit, I hope, upon this subject, never more to hear it mentioned.

With Madame Duval, all pleas of delicacy would be ineffectual; her scheme must be opposed by arguments better suited to her understanding: I will not, therefore, talk of its impropriety, but endeavour to prove its inutility. Have the goodness, then, to tell her that her own intentions would be frustrated by her plan; since, should the lawsuit be commenced, and even should the cause be gained, Sir John Belmont would still have it in his power, —and, if irritated, no doubt in his inclination — to cut off her grandaughter with a shilling.

She cannot do better, herself, than to remain quiet and inactive in the affair; the long and mutual animosity between her and Sir John will make her interference merely productive of debates and illwill; neither would I have Evelina appear till summoned; and as to myself, I must wholly decline *acting*, — though I will, with unwearied zeal, devote all my thoughts to giving counsel: but, in truth, I have neither inclination nor spirits adequate to engaging personally with this man.

My opinion is that he would pay more respect

to a letter from your Ladyship, upon this subject, than from any other person. I therefore advise and hope that you will yourself take the trouble of writing to him, in order to open the affair. When he shall be inclined to see Evelina, I have for him a posthumous letter, which his much-injured Lady left to be presented to him, if ever such a meeting should take place.

The views of the Branghtons, in suggesting this scheme, are obviously interested; they hope, by securing to Evelina the fortune of her father, to induce Madame Duval to settle her own upon themselves. In this, however, they would probably be mistaken; for little minds have ever a propensity to bestow their wealth upon those who are already in affluence; and, therefore, the less her grandchild requires her assistance, the more gladly she will give it.

I have but one thing more to add, from which, however, I can by no means recede: my word, so solemnly given to Lady Belmont, that her child should never be owned but with herself, must be inviolably adhered to.

I am, dear Madam, with great respect,

Your Ladyship's most obedient servant,

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XXIX.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry Hill, May 2.

HOW sincerely do I sympathise in the uneasiness and concern which my beloved Evelina has so much reason to feel! The cruel scheme in agitation is equally repugnant to my judgment and my inclination,—yet, to oppose it seems impracticable. To follow the dictates of my own heart, I should instantly recal you to myself, and never more consent to your being separated from me; but the manners and opinion of the world demand a different conduct. Hope, however, for the best; and be satisfied you shall meet with no indignity: if you are not received into your own family as you ought to be, and with the distinction that is your due, you shall leave it for ever; and, once again restored to my protection, secure your own tranquillity, and make, as you have hitherto done, all the happiness of my life.

LETTER XXX.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, May 6.

THE die is thrown, and I attend the event in trembling! Lady Howard has written to Paris, and sent her letter to town, to be forwarded in the ambassador's packet; and in less than a fortnight, therefore, she expects an answer. Oh, Sir, with what anxious impatience shall I wait its arrival! upon it seems to depend the fate of my future life! My solicitude is so great, and my suspense so painful, that I cannot rest a moment in peace, or turn my thoughts into any other channel,

Deeply interested as I now am in the event, most sincerely do I regret that the plan was ever proposed: methinks it *cannot* end to my satisfaction; for, either I must be torn from the arms of my *more* than father, or I must have the misery of being finally convinced that I am cruelly rejected by him who has the natural claim to that dear title; a title,—which, to write, mention,

or think of, fills my whole soul with filial tenderness.

The subject is discussed here eternally. Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval, as usual, quarrel whenever it is started: but I am so wholly engrossed by my own reflections, that I cannot even listen to them. My imagination changes the scene perpetually: one moment, I am embraced by a kind and relenting parent, who takes me to that heart from which I have hitherto been banished, and supplicates, through me, peace and forgiveness from the ashes of my mother!—at another, he regards me with detestation, considers me as the living image of an injured saint, and repulses me with horror!—But I will not afflict you with the melancholy phantasms of my brain, I will endeavor to compose my mind to a more tranquil state, and forbear to write again, till I have in some measure succeeded.

May Heaven bless you, my dearest Sir! and long, long may it continue you on earth, to bless

Your grateful

EVELINA!

LETTER XXXI.

LADY HOWARD TO SIR JOHN BELMONT, BART.

Howard Grove, May 5.

SIR,

YOU will, doubtless, be surprised at receiving a letter from one who had for so short a period the honor of your acquaintance, and that at so great a distance of time; but the motive, which has induced me to take this liberty, is of so delicate a nature, that, were I to commence making apologies for my officiousness, I fear my letter would be too long for your patience.

You have, probably, already conjectured the subject upon which I meant to treat: my regard for Mr. Evelyn and his amiable daughter was well known to you; nor can I ever cease to be interested in whatever belongs to their memory or family.

I must own myself somewhat distressed in what manner to introduce the purport of my writing; yet, as I think that, in affairs of this kind, frank-

ness is the first requisite to a good understanding between the parties concerned, I will neither torment you nor myself with punctilious ceremonies, but proceed instantly and openly to the business which occasions my giving you this trouble.

I presume, Sir, it would be superfluous to tell you, that your child resides still in Dorsetshire, and is still under the protection of the Reverend Mr. Villars, in whose house she was born; for, though no inquiries concerning her have reached his ears, or mine, I can never suppose it possible you have forborne to make them: it only remains, therefore, to tell you, that your daughter is now grown up; that she has been educated with the utmost care and the utmost success; and that she is now a most deserving, accomplished, and amiable young woman.

Whatever may be your view for her future destination in life, it seems time to declare it. She is greatly admired, and, I doubt not, will be very much sought after: it is proper, therefore, that her future expectations, and your pleasure concerning her, should be made known.

Believe me, Sir, she merits your utmost attention and regard. You could not see and know her, and remain unmoved by those sensations of affection which belong to so near and tender

a relationship. She is the lovely resemblance of her lovely mother: — pardon, Sir, the liberty I take in mentioning that unfortunate lady, but I think it behoves me, upon this occasion, to show the esteem I felt for her; allow me, therefore, to say, and be not offended at my freedom, that the memory of that excellent lady has but too long remained under the aspersions of calumny; surely it is time to vindicate her fame! — and how can that be done in a manner more eligible, more grateful to her friends, or more honorable to yourself, than by openly receiving as your child *the daughter of the late Lady Belmont?*

The venerable man, who has had the care of her education, deserves your warmest acknowledgments, for the unremitting pains he has taken and attention he has shown in the discharge of his trust. Indeed, she has been peculiarly fortunate in meeting with such a friend and guardian: a more worthy man, or one whose character seems nearer to perfection, does not exist.

Permit me to assure you, Sir, she will amply repay whatever regard and favor you may hereafter show her, by the comfort and happiness you cannot fail to find in her affection and duty. To be owned *properly* by you is the first wish

of her heart; and I am sure that to merit your approbation will be the first study of her life.

I fear that you will think this address impertinent; but I must rest upon the goodness of my intention to plead my excuse.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

M. Howard.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.